Vijñānabhairava Tantra

with the Commentaries by

Śivopādhyāya and Ānandabhaṭṭa

An English Translation, Introduction and Exposition by

Mark Dyczkowski

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Manish Maheshwari

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Centre for Shaiva Studies

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Dedicated to those
who have
preserved and transmitted
the Śaiva traditions

ABBREVIATIONS

ĪP	Īśvarapratyabhijñā
ĪPVv	Īśvarapratyabhijñāvivṛtivimarśinī
U	Uddyota
Kau	Kaumudī
TĀ	Tantrāloka
TĀv	Tantrālokaviveka
PrHṛ	Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya
ŚDṛ	Śivadṛṣṭi
ŚSū	Śivasūtra
ŚSūvi	Śivasūtravimarśinī
SpKā	Spandakārikā
SpNir	Spandanirṇaya
SpPra	Spandapradīpikā
VBh	Vijñānabhairava
SvT	Svacchandabhairavatantra
SvTu	Svacchandabhairavatantroddyota
NT	Netratantra
MBT KuKh	Manthānabhairavatantra (kūmārikākhaṇḍa)
MV	Mālinīvijayottaratantra
MVV	Mālinīvijayavārtika
MM	Mahārthamañjarī
APS	Ajaḍapramātṛsiddhi
YVā	Yogavāsiṣṭha
YSū	Yogasūtra
PTv	Parātrīśikāvivaraṇa

PS	Paramārthasāra
SP	Saṃvitprakāśa
StCi	Stavacintāmaṇi
ŚSt	Śivastotrāvalī
BhGī	Bhagavadgītā
BṛUp	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad
Pā	Pāṇini

EDITOR'S PREFACE

It is my privilege to present this volume, comprising Mark Dyczkowski's translation, Introduction, and exposition of the *Vijñānabhairava Tantra*, one of the most influential works of the non-dual Śaiva tantric tradition. Long-awaited, this publication represents the most complete and critically grounded presentation of the text to date.

The book is structured in two principal parts. The first consists of a substantial scholarly Introduction in which Mark situates the *Vijñānabhairava* within its intellectual and doctrinal milieu, addressing its ontological commitments and vision of ultimate liberation. He also provides a detailed interpretive analysis of some of the text's meditation practices, clarifying their internal logic and modes of practice. The second part presents the translated root text together with the classical commentaries of Ānandabhaṭṭa and Śivopādhyāya—rendered here in English for the first time. Taken together, this volume is the most comprehensive study of the *Vijñānabhairava Tantra* available in any language.

This work was long in the making. Mark began working on the *Vijñānabhairava* in the early 2000s, completing the core Text and Translation many years ago. The Introduction, however, was written much later, beginning in 2023, after he had concluded his work on the translation and commentary of the *Tantrāloka*. During the year and a half that followed, the *Vijñānabhairava* occupied a central place in our conversations. Many of these discussions revolved around the ontological commitments of the text and the difficulties involved in articulating them with precision. As Mark spoke, often at length, he refined his own understanding through the very act of explanation, working through problems that would eventually find their way into the written Introduction.

In July 2024, over dinner near his home in Kensington, London, Mark told me that he had nearly completed a first draft of the Introduction. He asked whether I would be willing to read and offer comments to the Introduction, and proofread the main Text and Translation. I agreed without hesitation. While the Text and Translation required only minor edits, in the case of the Introduction, my

comments were necessarily more substantive, given that the Introduction was still in draft form. Mark characteristically became annoyed with all my comments and suggestions to the Introduction, while adding—equally characteristically—that he would nevertheless review each one carefully. That was the last stage of our work together. A few months later, Mark passed away.

Shortly thereafter, I was contacted by his wife, who expressed the family's wish that the *Vijñānabhairava Tantra* be made ready for publication on the first anniversary of his passing. In the intervening period, my hard copy of the edited text handed to Mark had unfortunately been misplaced, requiring me to redo the editorial work on the main text. The more substantial work consisted in bringing his long and complex draft Introduction to a publishable state.

Editorial Notes

As noted above, the Introduction represents Mark's first draft. As received, the text could have permitted more substantive reorganisation and editing, nevertheless, editorial revision has been kept to a bare minimum. The principal changes consist of light reorganisation of certain sections, the introduction of new headings for clarity, the completion of unfinished or placeholder footnotes wherever possible, and the editing out of a few passages not central to the Introduction. In a few instances, I have supplied brief editorial footnotes indicating these change.

The editing of the Text and Translation was focused primarily on correcting typographical errors, resolving incomplete sentences, and addressing a small number of unattended footnotes. Substantive changes were avoided.

Note to the Reader

For readers unfamiliar with the *Vijñānabhairava Tantra*, this is a profound and demanding text of Śaiva tantric meditation. Some of the practices it presents presuppose considerable experiential and doctrinal maturity; others, however, are strikingly direct and accessible. Readers may find it helpful to begin with Appendix I, which presents the brief translation and snapshots of the 112 or 114 meditation practices, and Appendix II, where these practices are grouped thematically. The meditations need not be read linearly and may be approached according to the interest of the readers either individually or in a thematic cluster.

Mark's Introduction provides a detailed scholarly account of the intellectual genealogy and doctrinal positioning of the *Vijñānabhairava*. Questions concerning authorship, chronology, textual stratification, ontology, and philosophical reconciliation with systems such as Pratyabhijñā or Advaita Vedānta are of great importance to historians of ideas and to Indologists concerned with the development of Śaiva thought.

The beginner practitioner (*sādhaka*), however, need not resolve these questions in order to engage fruitfully with the text. While a general understanding of the ontological vision presupposed by the *Vijñānabhairava* and the Śaiva milieu from which it emerges is undoubtedly important for a fuller comprehension of the yoga it teaches, the practices themselves, at least at the initial stages, do not require prior theoretical resolution. The textual exposition of the meditation may at times be impenetrable, the practice it prescribes need not always be so. As Bhairava states toward the conclusion of the meditations, the goal of practice is the attainment of a state of mind free from the waves of fluctuations of thought (*nistaraṅga*). The meditations are accordingly to be undertaken and allowed to work in their own way toward this goal.

Final Thoughts

Publishing this volume on the first anniversary of Mark's passing is both an honour and a tribute—to his scholarship and his lifelong dedication to the study of Śaiva traditions.

To the reader, I hope that this meditation manual will serve as an invitation to the vast and exciting world of what is now known as Kashmir Śaivism, and to an exploration of some of the most sophisticated currents of Hindu thought.

I would like to express my gratitude to Mark's family—his wife Giovanna, his son Tristan, and his daughter Alice—for entrusting me with the task of bringing this monumental work to fruition. I would like to thank Arjun Serneels, Alka Tyagi and Mariya Karagyozova for their encouragement during the preparation; they have been Mark's students, associates, and fellow travellers on the path. And last, I would like to thank Janvi Ambawata, a promising young scholar of Sanskrit in helping me edit this volume.

Manish Maheshwari
Mysore, March 2026

About the Editor: Manish Maheshwari is the founder of the Centre for Shaiva Studies and the Tattva Heritage Foundation. His interests span Indian religions, Indian intellectual history, textual traditions, and the institutional conditions necessary for the sustained study and transmission of cultural knowledge. Previously, he worked in investment management in New York and Mumbai. He holds postgraduate degrees in finance and philosophy from Columbia University and Mumbai University respectively.

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the *Vijñānabhairava Tantra*

The *Vijñānabhairava Tantra* is the Teaching of Bhairava, Who is Enlightened Consciousness. Abhinavagupta calls it the *Śivavijñānopaniṣad*[1] 'the secret of Śiva consciousness'. Ānandabhaṭṭa, one of the commentators, refers to it as a treatise on Yoga.[2] Indeed, its sole concern is the practice of the meditations it teaches, which he calls 'Yoga'. The other commentator, Śivopādhyāya, refers to it as the Tantra of Consciousness (*vijñānatantra*).[3] Bhairava teaches the attainment of this consciousness, which is his own nature, by the practice of the meditations he imparts in this Tantra. Devoid of outer rituals except the most simple Mantras, it is a very unusual Tantra, indeed, unique. Moreover, the excellence of the manner of expression and the practices themselves are no less extraordinary. Relatively little known outside the Kashmir Valley, the *Vijñānabhairava* was translated into English for the first time by Swami Lakshmanjoo in the 1960s and published by Paul Reps along with a collection of Zen koans in a book called Zen Flesh, Zen Bones, which was quite popular at the time. Not long after that, the famous Maharishi Mahesh Yogi came to Kashmir to learn the meditations from Swami Lakshmanjoo and taught them to his many followers in India and the world. Moving on into the second half of the century, another well-known Guru—Rajaneesh (aka Osho)—lectured on the meditations and published them in a set of five volumes. Later, the Sanyāsinī Satsangānanda (Satsangi), a close disciple for many years of the great Satyānanda of Munger, where the Bihar School of Yoga is located, also published a volume of translations and expositions of the meditations. Soon, an app will be available online in which the practice of almost half the meditations will be explained and illustrated by Eyal Ostfeld who lives in Israel.

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[1] ĪPVv 2, p. 405

[2] He concludes his commentary saying: *iti śrīvijñānabhairavaṃ nāma yogaśāstraṃ samāptam* 'this treatise on Yoga (*yogaśāstra*) called the venerable *Vijñānabhairava* is complete.'

[3] This name appears twice in the commentary on v 155–156 (153–155ab).

Swami Lakshmanjoo (born 1907, died 1991) delivered a series of lectures in the early 70s on the *Vijñānabhairava*. These were transcribed and published by the Ishwar Ashram Trust. This explanation, given by the last realized Śaiva master in Kashmir stands in a unique category of its own. It is the only modern one that is imparted by such a master, and as such it deserves very special attention. Accordingly, I have included here and there in this translation, extracts from Swamijī's teachings where he says something more than the Kashmiri commentators who preceded him. Numerous translations have been made of the *Vijñānabhairava* into other languages.[4] The first was by Lilian Silburn, into French, published in 1970. Her presentation of the meditations is adorned with citations from Christian and Sufi mystics. Bettina Śāradā Bäumer has translated it into both English and German. Also well-known is Jai Deva Singh's translation. Two other translations by Indians are by Satya Prakash Singh and Ranjit Chaudari. Wallis has made a useful concordance comparing as many as thirteen translations, including his own.[5] Wallis has presented 8 English translations, 2 French, 1 German, 1 Spanish and 2 English renderings. There is another by Seroni into Italian (Adelphi 1989), which he has not included. Wallis's concordance is indeed useful, presenting in one place the translations or renditions of as many as fifteen people. I notice that in my own books written over a period of several decades, the same passage may be variously translated.[6] So, we should not be surprised to see

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[4] See bibliography for details.

[5] Vijñāna Bhairava Tantra–Master Translation Concordance by Christopher (aka Hareesh) Wallis (unpublished).

[6] For example take VBh 117 (115). The Sanskrit reads:

yatra yatrākṣamārgeṇa caitanyaṃ vyajyate vibhoḥ |
tasya tanmātradharmitvāc cillayād bharitātmatā ||

I have translated that here as follows:

Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of the senses, (their object) dissolves away within consciousness and so, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude (as all things manifest as the yogi's true nature).

Earlier publications' readers will find another three of my own translations of this verse. They are as follows:

how much they may differ from one person to another. Even so, one wonders which of these translations is the most correct. None is, nor could be fully correct. There is a saying in Italian–'traduttore tradittore' meaning '(each) translator a traitor'. So, in order to avoid betraying the text as much as possible, I have supplied a word-for-word equivalent below my translation of each verse.

The number of translations clearly testifies to the popularity of the *Vijñānabhairava* in modern times, which is itself indicative of the surprisingly rapid growth of interest in Kashmir Śaivism in the West and, more recently, in India also, where translations into Malayalam, Telugu and other South Indian languages as well as Hindi have been published.

Certainly, a modern translation and exposition of the text can contribute much to our understanding of the practice of the meditations that the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches. However, that does not mean that the commentaries we have in Sanskrit do not also have their own value. Dubois has translated one of them—Śivopādhyāya—into French. The present work includes a full English translation of both surviving Sanskrit ones (more on that below). In order to further help us understand this not infrequently difficult text, I have also sought out the places where these meditations have been quoted in the Sanskrit sources and so created, in a way, a third commentary on some of them. Of course, however many explanations of these meditations we may look at, the aim is to understand how to practice each one and apply it. Ultimately, there is no other way than to do them.

'Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of any one of the senses, it dissolves away within consciousness because it possesses just that same nature and so (the yogi becomes Bhairava, who is) the state of (perfect) plenitude.'

'Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of the senses, (their object) dissolves away within consciousness, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, and so (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude (as all things manifest as the yogi's true nature).'

'In whichever thing the consciousness of the universal Being is manifested through the senses, consciousness alone is the ground of that appearance. Realizing this, one is dissolved into consciousness (which is the ground of the universe) and thus, experiences the entire fullness of being i.e., the full aspect of Bhairava is there within him.'

The Commentaries on the *Vijñānabhairava*

Kṣemarāja was Abhinavagupta's direct disciple, indeed, he is the only one who left behind a legacy of his own. He was a very brilliant man. The work of his life was to fill in the gaps in Abhinavagupta's exposition of the Tantras and their related revelations as well as write concise introductions to the non-dualist Śaivism of Kashmir. With regards to the former endeavour, he says at the beginning of his exposition of the *Spandakārikā* that he is doing it because his master had been concerned with greater, more important matters and so he had done so himself. No doubt sensing the same need, he wrote a commentary on the *Vijñānabhairava* of which, unfortunately, *only the first 23 introductory verses have survived.*[7] The high degree which he values the *Vijñānabhairava* is evident by the many times he quotes it. Specifically, he perceives a very close relationship between the *Vijñānabhairava* and the *Śivasūtra* and sought to establish it by quoting the former in as many as twenty-five verses in his commentary on the latter. He quotes it five times in the *Spandanirṇaya*, his commentary on the *Spandakārikā*, which is considered to be a commentary on the *Śivasūtra*. He continues to quote it in his other works,[8] but it is in these texts belonging to the Spanda school, that his citations are most copious and notably significant. Indeed, the extent of his citations clearly suggests that he considered the teachings of the *Vijñānabhairava* to be a major source, albeit indirectly, of the *Śivasūtra*s and so too, by extension of the *Spandakārikā*. All of them together and each one individually, transmit the secret teachings (*rahasyopaniṣad*). As we proceed through the meditations, we will take note of the *Sūtra*s, Kṣemarāja connects to meditations from the *Vijñānabhairava*. We notice that he nowhere lets on that the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that the world is an illusion, which, from his point of view, can only be said to be so as a manner of speaking, not literally. He does not affirm it, but nor does he deny it. This is in contrast with the two surviving commentators who do not hide it, although, it should be said, that they mostly do not emphasize it even as they do not shy away from it when it is expressly mentioned in a meditation.

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[7] A reference from it in his commentary on the *Netratantra* confirms that all of it existed. I am grateful to Bettina Bäumer for pointing this out to me.

[8] He quotes four in the *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya*, six in the *Svacchandatantra* and two in the *Netratantra*.

Another early surviving commentary is the *Dvayasampatti* by Hrasvanātha, the son of Harṣadatta. It covers just a few verses of the *Vijñānabhairava*, part of which is quoted by Śivopādhyāya.[9] He also wrote another short tract called the *Subodhamañjarī* where he refers to the practice he teaches and sees in the meditations in the *Vijñānabhairava* as *sukhopāya*, 'the pleasant or easy means'.

However, the earliest surviving *complete* commentary is a relatively brief one by Ānandabhaṭṭa called *Vijñānakaumudī*, translated here into English for the first time. He says at the end of it that he is from Kashmir and that he finished in ***vedasaptarṣivedāntyayugābdamadhupakṣatau.***[10] So, we can distinguish him from a Bengali Vedāntin of the same name who lived in the 16th or 17th century who wrote the *Vallabhacarita*. As was the case with non-dualist Śaivites in Kashmir generally from about the 12th century onwards, Ānandabhaṭṭa, like Jayaratha who commented on the *Tantrāloka* some two or three centuries before, professed himself to be a follower of Śrīvidyā.

Śivopādhyāya, who was also a Kashmiri, lived after Ānandabhaṭṭa, possibly in the 17th century. He wrote another, more extensive, commentary which he named after Kṣemarāja's, called the *Vijñānabhairavoddyota*—the Radiant Illumination of the *Vijñānabhairava* (VBhU). He incorporated much of Ānandabhaṭṭa's commentary into his own. While they have much in common, there are several differences in the approach of these two commentaries and the fragment that has survived by Kṣemarāja. While both the first two sometimes refer to Advaita Vedānta, Ānandabhaṭṭa does so considerably more. Conversely, while both draw from the Pratyabhijñā occasionally, Śivopādhyāya, does so more often. What is particularly distinctive of his commentary is his references to Buddhism. Kashmir was an extremely important centre of Buddhism for centuries until it was uprooted by the Muslims around the 13th century. It is surprising that Śivopādhyāya found surviving Buddhist manuscripts and took the trouble to read and quote from them. We will see further ahead the Buddhist influence on some of the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava*.

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[9] See below commentary on VBh 90 where I have translated the remaining part of the text in the notes.

[10] Editor's Note: This was left untranslated in the Mark Dyczkowski's manuscript. Tentatively, this means "In the Kali-yuga, in the year 47, in the month of Madhu, during its fortnight", but from merely this description it is not possible to determine the exact dates.

The continued existence of these commentaries is a testimony to the abiding popularity of the *Vijñānabhairava*. Another is the existence of an unusually large number of manuscripts of it. Moreover, its extensive use has given rise to a notable feature of the transmission of the text, namely, that it has preserved a surprisingly large number of viable variants. They are so many that both the commentators, Ānandabhaṭṭa and, especially, Śivopādhyaya, feel compelled to note several of them in their commentaries. Clearly, a complete study of the *Vijñānabhairava* requires an edition of the text on the basis of the largest number of manuscripts possible, taking note of the major significant variants. The differences between the texts the two commentators follow are exemplary of the variety of the manuscript sources. Indeed, the addition of a verse and other alterations in Śivopādhyāya's version with respect to that of Ānandabhaṭṭa results in a different numbering in places. This is noted after the verse. *The first numbering is that of Śivopādhyāya, the second, in brackets that follows, is that of Ānandabhaṭṭa's edition.*

Textual History of *Vijñānabhairava*

We now turn to the *Vijñānabhairava* itself. As Tantras are structured in general, especially the older ones, the goddess asks questions to which the god's response is the teachings of the Tantra, 'brought down to earth by a series of questions and answers'. In the beginning, the goddess says that she has heard 'all that has originated from the *Rudrayāmala* (Tantra) that is, the Trika category (of your revelation). (But although I have heard) the essence of its essence entirely, part by part, (rising through the higher levels of scripture), even now, O Supreme Lord, my doubt has not been quelled.'[11] In the end, satisfied by the answer, in the form of a series of meditations, the goddess concludes that she has heard 'the essence' of the *Rudrayāmala*.[12]

Clearly, the *Rudrayāmala* is presented as a very important Tantra, especially because a branch of Trika (*trikabheda*) is derived from it, as its most essential teaching. The *Vijñānabhairava* is presented here as answering the most essential of all questions about the Trika teachings of the *Rudrayāmala*. The *Parātrīśika*, a short but very important Trika tract consisting of less than forty verses, also affiliates itself to the *Rudrayāmala*. However, no trace of either

[11] *VBh* v 1–2ab.

[12] *VBh* v 161cd-162ab.

text is found in the extant *Rudrayāmala*, which is a long work that belongs to the latter period. It is certainly not prior to the 15th century and may be considerably more recent. It refers to itself as the *uttarārdha*–'the second half' with deference, quite probably, to a previously existing *Rudrayāmala*. In the later period (after the 12th century), we find an increasing number of short tracts consisting of hymns, 108 or 1008 names of a deity, Mantras and the like, that are ascribed to the *Rudrayāmala*. They are found in manuscript collections all over India. However, the text itself, that is said to contain them, has not been located. It is not cited by Abhinavagupta or the other Kashmiri exegetes nor does it appear in the works of early South Indian Siddhāntins, including the 12th-century Aghoraśivācārya. So, one wonders whether it ever existed beyond being a phantom locus of ascription that lent authority to the tracts that affiliated themselves to it. This may well be true despite the fact that of all major Tantric tracts to which short passages of this sort ascribe themselves, the *Rudrayāmala* is by far the most common.

In this case, this affiliation is particularly interesting and makes one doubt whether the *Rudrayāmala* did exist after all, given how heavily this important branch of Trika chooses to rest on its authority. The *Vijñānabhairava* also implicitly presents itself as a Trika Tantra by referring to the *Triśirobhairava-tantra* in the opening verses which we know was a Trika Tantra. This is because Abhinava quotes a description of its variant of a Trident Maṇḍala. The *Vijñānabhairava* is clearly conscious of the existence of this, the Tantra of the Three Headed Bhairava, and wished to supplement and correct it by shifting it out from its reported concern for Mantras to meditative practice.[13]

To do this, the *Vijñānabhairava* refers at the beginning to the core, most characteristic Trika Mantras, that is, the Vidyās of the Triadic Trika Goddesses Parā, Parāparā and Aparā along with Navātman, the Bhairava of Aparā. These Mantras, Bhairava declares, do not lead to the desired goal of liberation, which can only be achieved by meditation, of which the *Vijñānabhairava* is the Trika teaching. It may be objected that the frame narrative is an addition to the text

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[13] Abhinavagupta quotes several passages, some quite long, from the *Triśirobhairava* in the *Tantrāloka*. He treats it as a major Trika Tantra. Jayartha had access to it but it was subsequently lost. Abhinavagupta tells us that the first chapter was dedicated to the presentation of a large number of *maṇḍalas* and *cakras*, but none of the passages Abhinavagupta quotes from it concern Mantras. Most of them are very rich and powerful visualizations (*dhyānas*).

and so may not characterize it. The first impression one gets of the initial narrative that precedes the meditations, and so too of the concluding section of the *Vijñānabhairava* that follows after them, is that it may not have been originally written together with the meditations. It is certainly possible that they were a collection of free-floating meditations or drawn from various sources.[14] But this is just a conjecture.

However, it may have been compiled, there can be no doubt that the *Vijñānabhairava* was traditionally considered to be a Trika Tantra. Thus, the *Kumārikākhaṇḍa* of the *Manthānabhairavatantra* (redacted around the 10th CE) refers to it together with the *Mālinīvijayottara* and the (otherwise unknown) *Parāṣaṭka*, as one of the highest Trika Tantras which, along with the *Kālikākula*, is just below its own Kubjikā Tantras.[15] Moreover, in keeping with its character as a Trika text, the Goddess Parā who is Bhairava's partner and the one who questions him, thus eliciting the Tantra, appears as Parā in the meditations also. Major Kaula goddesses—such as Kālī, Tripurasundarī and Kubjikā—are all identified as the Supreme Goddess–Parādevī or just Parā (the Supreme One), in the context of their own tradition. They should not be confused with the Trika goddess.[16] The goddess of the *Vijñānabhairava* is addressed as Parā several times in the meditations, as a proper name, not just as an epithet ('she who is supreme').[17] For example, the energy (*śakti*) of the Void of Śiva/Bhairava consciousness which according to the *Vijñānabhairava* is the one ultimate reality, is called Parā.

Fortunately, three amongst the earliest Trika Tantras have survived. They are the *Siddhayogeśvarīmata*, which is the earliest, along with the *Tantrasadbhāva*, which is as yet unpublished, and the *Mālinīvijayottara*. The

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[14] An example is verse 55. This directs the yogi to remain wakeful during the transition from the waking state to sleep. This well-known meditation is commonly linked specifically to Trika practice. However, we find a parallel verse in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* from which it may be drawn. This is more likely than the other way around as it appears in a more extensive context in the *Yogavāṣiṭha* that discusses the practice and its results at length.

[15] See KuKh 68/114cd-116ab. Dyczkowski 2007: vol. 13 note 47, 53, and 55.

[16] The goddess Parā, as the supreme form of Tripurasundarī, is well known in South India, and is commonly iconically represented in stone or on copper plates and the like. She is not the Goddess Parā, referred to here or in other Trika texts.

[17] See, for example, verse 24.

latter is the most compact and systematic which may, quite possibly, be taken as evidence of its being the last of the three. Although all three are most certainly Trika Tantras, insofar as their primary focus of worship is the Triadic Goddess Parā, Parāparā and Aparā, each is seated on her own Bhairava in a lotus on one of the prongs of Śiva's Trident. However, none of them refer to themselves as Trika Tantras or, indeed, show signs of knowing the term at all. We know from references, mostly supplied by Abhinavagupta and to a lesser extent, his disciple Kṣemarāja, that this changed with time. The very names of some latter Trika Tantras, such as the *Trikasāra* and *Trikahṛdaya* testify to this transition. As we have seen, although none of the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava* refer to Trika, they do refer to Parā. The narrative framework however does know of Trika by that name. Indeed, it is even aware that there are various kinds of Trika.

Śiva's presence everywhere, which is the subject of several meditations taught in the *Vijñānabhairava*, justifies an important, indeed, central approach to non-dualist Kaula practice. One is the interiorization of sacred places.[18] Another is the denial that the distinctions between pure and impure are ultimately real (VBh 123).[19] Another one, which is relevant here, and of which we find several examples, is the realisation of Deity through the activity of the senses.

Numerous meditations are concerned with the spiritualization of what would otherwise be just worldly pleasures. It dedicates a cluster of meditations to be practiced in the course of making love along with the pleasures of eating food and listening to music. Indeed, anything that pleases the mind.[20] The general assumption that any experience, emotion, or perception can be spiritualized is generally well-known to be typically Kaula. The *Vijñānabhairava* is acquainted with the sacred geography populated by Yoginīs and Siddhas, and the successful adept is said to be 'beloved of the Yoginīs'. (see below verse (141–142ab) (139–140ab)). This too is a typical Kaula view and sentiment. Even so, we nowhere find reference to Kaulism or its specific characteristic terminology (like the word 'Kula' itself).

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[18] VBh v 150cd-151 (148cd-149).

[19] 'That which people of little understanding consider to be purity is impurity according to the Śaiva teachings. There is neither purity nor impurity. Therefore, one who is free of (such dichotomizing) notions is happy (and blissful).' VBh 123

[20] See VBh 68–74.

I have noted in an earlier work that the distinct identity of Kaulism emerges gradually in the course of the development of the Tantras within the Bhairava current, specifically, within those belonging to the Vidyāpīṭha.[21] The earliest known extensive Tantra belonging to the Vidyāpīṭha is the *Brahmayāmala*. There we find the first use of the term 'kula' with reference to the 'family' of one of a group of eight Mothers (*mātṛkā*). Significant as it may be, there is hardly any other reference to Kula in this Tantra, even though it is powerfully oriented towards antinomian rites performed in cremation grounds, as befits its character as a Kāpālika Tantra. Subsequently, we observe a few references to secret Kaula practices, embedded in other teachings. Finally, traditions, rites, Yogas and other practices come to be clearly called 'Kaula'.

Specifically, we observe that early Trika Tantras such as the *Siddhayogeśvarīmata* and the *Tantrasadbhāva* do not refer to themselves as Kaula Tantras, although their praxis contains many features that can be subsumed under that heading. So, we may surmise that Kaulism had not yet developed as an independent typology, or at least had not yet asserted itself in Trika Śaivism. The *Mālinīvijayottara* is an advance on that stage. Chapter 11 is dedicated to Kaula initiation but apart from a brief passage on the worship of the Mothers as the Assembly of Kulas (MVT 19/5–10), there is little more. We know from numerous references Abhinavagupta draws from later Trika Tantras that they came to consider themselves as strongly Kaula. Indeed, Abhinavagupta presents Trika as the culmination of Kaulism. If this assessment of the historical development of Trika Kaulism is correct, the absence of such references in the *Vijñānabhairava* is significant.

We may contrast this scenario with that of another Trika Tantra that has come down to us–the *Parātrīśikā*. There the terms Akula and Kula for the transcendent and immanent absolute, Deity and its infinite energies, appear in the very first verse. It is not unreasonable to take this to be evidence that the *Vijñānabhairava* precedes the *Parātrīśikā*. A meditation in the *Vijñānabhairava* on the five Mudrās taught in the Krama teachings, may be taken to be evidence that the *Vijñānabhairava* was being redacted after it came into existence if we assume that it is not a later interpolation. Evidence for this is that there appears to be very little connection with the mediations that pre-

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[21] The word '*pīṭha*' here means 'group', 'collection' or 'class'. It has nothing to do with sacred sites. The Tantras of the Vidyāpīṭha belong to the group of scriptures in which goddesses—*vidyās*—predominate.

cede and follow it. This is not Maheśvarānanda's view. He sees the following five mediations that involve posturing or movement of the body as their outer form. But that seems unlikely. Certainly, this equation is not found anywhere else.

The formulation of these five is central to the systematized, most developed form of the Krama system. Indeed, Śivopādhyāya leaps at the opportunity in his commentary to offer a concise presentation of the Krama teachings. Kṣemarāja, who, like his teacher Abhinavagupta, had a special predilection for Krama teachings, tells us that he had also done the same in his lost commentary.[22] Although it is not possible to assign any exact date to this, the final development of the Krama system, there can be no doubt that the redactor(s) of *Vijñānabhairava* had access to the system that had developed beyond its early stages. If it had already reached the stage in which it was taught by Śivānanda, who brought the Krama system to the Kashmir Valley in the middle of the ninth century, then we would have to admit that the *Vijñānabhairava* belongs to that time. But this is unlikely. As we shall see in some detail further ahead, the *Spandakārikā* draws and reworks verses from the *Vijñānabhairava*. If that is so, the *Vijñānabhairava* predates it and so too Śivānanda, who lived about the same time as the *Spandakārikā* was redacted.

According to Kṣemarāja, the relationship between the *Śivasūtras* and *Spandakārikā*, on the one hand, and the *Vijñānabhairava* on the other, is very close. Kṣemarāja cites as many as fifteen meditations from the *Vijñānabhairava* in his commentary on the *Śivasūtra*. This means that he finds that no less than a quarter of the 71 *sūtras* teach a meditation compatible, if not drawn directly, from the *Vijñānabhairava*. The *Spandakārikās* are understood by the tradition to be a commentary on the *Śivasūtra*. Accordingly, Kṣemarāja takes great care

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[22] *mudrātra prathamaṁ svaśarīraniḥsaraṇasamaye karaṅkiṇī, taccharīrākramaṇe krodhanā, tadraśmyādivilāpane lelihānā, tatpurād niḥsaraṇe khecarī, svahṛtprāptau bhairavī |tadbandhasatattvaṁ śrīvijñānabhairavoddyote asmābhirdarśitam |*

'The first Mudrā here is Karaṅkinī (that operates) when one exits from the body. Krodhanā (is the mudrā that operates) when that body is being attacked. Lelihānā (operates) when its rays (of sensations) and the rest are destroyed. Khecarī (operates) when coming forth from that body. Bhairavī (operates) when one's own Heart is attained. I have explained the formation of those (gestures) and their true nature in the venerable *Vijñānabhairavoddyota*.' Kṣemarāja commentary on the *Netra* Tantra ad 20/36ab.

to quote all of the fifty-one *Spandakārikās* in his commentary on the *Śivasūtra* in order to align the two. Although the relationship between the *sūtras* and the *Vijñānabhairava* is not as tight as this in his mind, nonetheless, they are seen to be close. This implies a number of things. One is that the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava* are a fundamental feature of the emergent post-scriptural exegetical tradition. This is underscored by the numerous citations Jayaratha sees implicit in the Anuttaratrika of the *Tantrāloka* he is commenting on.

However, the similarly implied connection between the Spanda and Krama teachings, in which they are rooted, and the *Vijñānabhairava* is more problematic. The *Vijñānabhairava* is acquainted with the Krama system. The reference to the basic elements of it in one place is evidence of that. The Goddess is certainly conspicuously present as the Supreme Deity as she is in the Krama system, although much less so than Bhairava and Śiva. When she does appear, she is either devoid of a specific identity or is identified as Parā, who is the supreme goddess of Trika. She is never identified with Kālī or associated with her so as to link her with the goddess of the Krama system. This is significant because it tells us much about the core of the reality to which the meditations are doors.

As we shall see in detail further ahead, the consciousness that the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches is ultimate reality and deity is not dynamic, as it is in the Krama system and its derivative Spanda. In this respect, its view is more in line with the Trika Tantras we have recovered, mentioned above. The references drawn from other lost Trika Tantras that were not syncretised with Krama similarly indicate, as one would expect, that they did not consider consciousness to be dynamic. Thus, from this point of view, one could say that the *Vijñānabhairava* is a purely Trika Tantra.

But although it is relatively easy to establish that the *Vijñānabhairava* predates the *Śivasūtra*, dating it with any more precision is difficult without evidence. Moreover, it is further complicated by the possibility that it was redacted by several people over time, developing gradually by accretion. As the meditations are single units, that would be easy to do. Indeed, one of the first questions that comes to mind when we are confronted with these very sophisticated meditations is how they fit together with one another, or, should we accept that they do not? Perhaps at some early stage a manuscript was dropped and the folios disarranged. It may appear at first sight that the meditations are presented without any particular order in mind. However, it emerges, as one reflects more deeply on them that that is not so, or, at least,

not completely so. For example, we observe that the meditations with a common or similar theme or that develop from one another, are imparted in clusters. Moreover, within these clusters, certain meditations are more fundamental than others, in the sense that they serve as their original model of which the other members of that group appear to be variants with additions and modifications. Again, one can make out sometimes, it seems, an order between the clusters. In other instances, the transition from one cluster to another may not be clear. Moreover, we observe what appears to be some degree of repetition of similar practices set at a distance from each other. This, in some cases, may be intentional. But while we may observe continuities in this way and even make out in a very general way a loose, often discontinuous structure, it is not possible to make out a fully coherent one.

Thus, to aid us in this, it is necessary to have two versions of the text, which are presented in the appendix. In one, the verses are in the same serial order in which they have been printed. Each one labelled according to the focus in the core practice. In the other, they are arranged according to themes.

Another significant feature of the structure of the *Vijñānabhairava* that may give us some idea of how it was built up, is the narrative that frames it and the places where it seems to end, to which we now turn. The exposition of the meditations concludes with a statement that they number 112 (VBh 139 (137)). However, up to there, they are 114. This suggests that additions were made later. The figure 112 (or 114 for that matter) has no symbolic significance. We can take it to be the result of simply counting the number of meditations at the end. This statement could well have been the way the *Vijñānabhairava* concluded at some earlier stage of its development. The verse that follows is a typical way of ending a treatise of this sort by presenting the benefits of dedication to its practice. Thus, Bhairava declares:

> O Goddess! (such a yogi) attains freedom from old age and death and is endowed with (all of a yogi's) abilities (*guṇa*) beginning with the power to make himself small at will (*aṇimā*). He is the beloved of the Yoginīs and presides over all the gatherings (of Siddhas and Yoginīs). Although he lives, he is liberated, and even though he (continues) to act (in his daily life, he is untainted). (141–142ab) (139–140ab)

It is quite probable that at some earlier stage of redaction the *Vijñānabhairava* ended here, the verses, that follow (from 142cd (140cd) to 157 (155cd), the end) comprise a well-defined unit in which the inner counterparts of the

components of outer ritual are described. Although certainly cogent to the subject of the main body of the *Vijñānabhairava*, insofar as meditations are substituted for ritual, the subject is not mentioned elsewhere. The framing narrative at the beginning only refers to the practice of Trika Mantras, which are presented as ineffective as a means to liberation by themselves.

In the concluding section, the *Vijñānabhairava* presents a series of interiorizations of basic outer ritual practices.[23] It is hard to see why these should not also be considered to be meditations unless we take them to be, as they are presented in the text, as the 'true' higher rites of which outer rites are poor representations. But this seems to be a very strained interpretation. If they are meditations, why are they not counted along with the others?

Their presentation, independently of the 112 (sic 114) meditations, appears to imply that the *Vijñānabhairava* does not consider them to be meditations in their own right. This is strange. After all, the point is surely that, as mediations, they are higher than the rites they replicate. Moreover, the *Vijñānabhairava* is tacitly stating that some meditations develop this way from the interiorization of ritual, as we shall have occasion to examine further ahead. The reflections on the nature of the inner equivalents within consciousness of outer ritual action make no difference to the core of the text. They are meaningful and interesting, certainly, but nonetheless superfluous, unless we take them to be part of the core of the *Vijñānabhairava* as meditations in themselves. So here is a clear example of how the text has developed through accretion, at different hands.

So, is the narrative framework at the beginning also an *ad hoc* addition? Certainly, it is essential in order to establish that the *Vijñānabhairava* is a Trika text as it implicitly claims to be. Moreover, it serves as a good, cogent introduction which is relevant to the core meditations. Four major points are made there. The first is that Mantras are not effective even though they are Trika Mantras, which are, of course, the very best. They belong to the category of Trika Tantras (*trikabheda*) related to the Three-Headed Bhairava, who lends his name to one of the most important and extensive Trika Tantras out of the dozen or so that Abhinavagupta quotes in his writings, i.e. the *Triśirobhairava Tantra*. The next point is that, like Mantras, all other means to realization, which is the *Vijñānabhairava*'s sole concern, are also ineffective. But, although

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[23] See VBh 144cd-152 (142cd-150).

this is so, they are useful as ways of encouraging aspirants to realisation and impelling them on the right path. They are like sweets that a mother may offer her young child to encourage it to behave correctly (VBh v 13). This leads to the third point, which is that the world, and with it the path to realization, is illusory, like a dream or a magic show. Finally, although meditation is not in itself effective, the teachings of the *Vijñānabhairava* do lead to the states of realization they promise. The meditations are imparted with the utmost confidence. If practiced properly, they will bear wonderful fruit. This is always liberation, which the *Vijñānabhairava* denotes, as we shall see, in many ways. It has little, if any, concern for yogic powers or, even worldly benefits.

It seems at first sight that all this is achieved by the yogi's determination and assiduous practice. This is implied in many of the meditations by the promise that they will bear fruit in a short time, hardly a few days. Clearly, that could only be possible if the yogi is totally dedicated to his practice. Although the *Vijñānabhairava* does not refer to grace directly, it repeats in several places that entry into the Void is by virtue of Parā who is the power of the Void. This implies that it is not the result of personal effort. The yogis who are successful are charged with Śiva's power of grace. This power is the door to realization (*śaivimukha*).[24]

The *Vijñānabhairava* as a source of the *Stanzas on Vibration*

The *Spandakārikā*—the Stanzas on Vibration—is a short tract of just fifty-one dense verses that expound the basic teachings centred on the concept of *Spanda*. The basic view is that there is only one reality. This is Śiva, who is conative, cognitive, and active consciousness. Full of its energies it has two aspects. One is perpetually actively engaged (*satatodita*) in perceiving the myriad forms of the universe that arise and fall away in harmony with the rhythm of the pulse—*Spanda*—of the 'opening' (*unmeṣa*) and 'closing' of Śiva's eyes, that thereby emanate and withdraw the universe. The other aspect is also dynamic but rests in itself as the universal subjectivity that is the innate nature (*svasvabhāva*) of all things, that flows through them individually and collectively, thereby sustaining their existence. This understanding of reality as dynamic and cognitive is coupled with the tacit acceptance of the reality of things just as they are phases of its dynamism.

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[24] VBh v 22-24ab.

We shall see that this view of reality differs substantially from the *Vijñānabhairava* in its original pristine enunciation. Although both agree that the one reality is Śiva/Bhairava, who is cognitive consciousness and is saturated with its power in countless forms, the *Vijñānabhairava* is not dynamically creative thereby. Rather, the world is considered to be an illusory appearance. We shall explore the contrast between the two views further ahead. Here we shall focus on how, despite these fundamental differences, the *Stanzas* draw from the *Vijñānabhairava* and the modifications that had to be made for that to be possible. These observations are incidental to our primary aim here, which is to establish that these passages in the *Stanzas* provide strong, concrete evidence for the *Vijñānabhairava*'s priority in time. We begin with the following meditation in the *Vijñānabhairava* which directs that:

> 'Just when anger begins and ends, when in fear, grieving, (facing a) deep pit, or fleeing from battle, when (intensely) curious, or when hunger starts or ends, the Being of the Brahman stands close at hand.'[25]

Compare this with the *Spandakārikā* that teaches:

> '*Spanda* is stable in the state one enters when extremely angry, intensely excited, running or wandering what to do.'[26]

Both meditations declare that ultimate reality—whether it be the Brahman or *Spanda*—can be experienced in moments of powerful psychic intensity by attending closely to the consciousness which is the source of these intense emotions. It is most unlikely that the *Vijñānabhairava* gets this meditation from the *Spandakārikā* (cogently quoted by Ānandabhaṭṭa in his commentary on this verse) or other such post-scriptural sources. Indeed, the author of the *Spandakārikā* has no pretense of being original. Rather, he was deeply aware that he is inspired by scripture and explaining it, even though very few of the *Stanzas* can be identified as directly drawn from it. What has happened in this

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[25] *krodhādyante bhaye śoke gahvare vā raṇād drute |*
kutūhale kṣudhādyante brahmasattā samīpagā || VBh 118 (116)

See the notes on this verse and exposition below in the translation.

[26] *atikruddhaḥ prahṛṣṭo vā kiṃ karomīti vā mṛśan |*
dhāvan vā yat padaṃ gacchet tatra spandaḥ pratiṣṭhitaḥ || SpKā 22

For details concerning this verse, see Dyczkowski, 1992, p. 100–102, 158–159, 223–224 and corresponding notes.

meditation in the *Stanzas* is that the experience of the dynamism of consciousness—*Spanda*—has replaced the experience of Bhairava or the static, tranquil 'being of the Brahman' as the ultimate experience. We observe here a development of doctrine. There is no reference to Spanda here or anywhere in the *Vijñānabhairava*. On the contrary, it strongly emphasizes tranquil 'waveless' (*nistaraṅga*) pure consciousness, free of thought as the goal. Thus, one meditation directs that:

> 'Freeing the mind of (all) support one should not conceive (any) thoughts. O gazelle-eyed one, then (the individual) self is (merged in) the Supreme Self and so is (recognized to be) Bhairava.[27]

Śivopādhyāya comments that if the mind is free of perceptions and thoughts, and does not conceive any more of them, the individual soul is then in the state of the Supreme Self and so is Bhairava Himself. Thus, he says:

> 'The (limited, confined) condition of the individual soul is due to the power of (the mind's) intention (to formulate thoughts), whereas (its) condition as the Brahman is (due to) the plane free of thoughts. Therefore, one should not create thoughts.'

This freedom from thought is the most fundamental characteristic of the goal of all the meditations taught in the *Vijñānabhairava*. This is why they are called 'without waves' (*nistaraṅga*). As Bhairava says to the goddess concerning them:

> 'O Goddess! I have revealed (these) one hundred and twelve teachings concerning (the state) free of the waves (of the fluctuations of thought), knowing which a person possesses the knowledge (that frees from bondage).'[28]

Although the *Vijñānabhairava* does teach that Bhairava is omnipresent and nothing exists apart from Him,[29] and that cosmic waves arise out of him like waves out of the sea or flames from a fire,[30] nonetheless, the ocean of Śiva consciousness, is the motionless Void, which is a perpetual fire burning with its infinite power. To say that Spanda is 'stable' on such occasions, as the

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[27] VBh v 108 (107).
[28] VBh 139 (137).
[29] VBh 124 (122).
[30] VBh 110 (109).

Spandakārikā declares, means that the dynamic recurrent pulse of cognitive consciousness—*Spanda*—is the underlying absolute ground that abides unchanging and constantly realized. Universal Spanda is the totality of the countless individual pulsations making up the rich, complex activity of each and everything. It is 'stable' because it is full and complete, nothing could be added to it or subtracted from it. It is Everything and so transcends, even as it underlies, every single thing. 'Things', in other words, are in a state of constantly becoming themselves or becoming something else. This is how they are and persist. This Act of Being through constant Becoming is a fractal of the hologram of becoming through combination, separation, collapse, reconstitution, self-deployment, and mutual influence within the sphere of the ecology of existence to which it belongs. The single most striking characteristic of the permanence of becoming (*sṛṣṭisthiti*) is the proliferation, no less than the permanence of its cessation (*saṃhārasthiti*). The permanence of persistence (*sthisthiti*) guarantees the balance of these two aspects of the dynamics of what can only be called 'emptiness', for nothing is permanent. Consequently, as we shall see, ultimate reality, indeed even daily life, according to the *Vijñānabhairava* is Emptiness. Hereto, despite the similarities, we find a fundamental difference. This dynamism which is the ground of the Spanda teachings and, in a variety of ways, of all the Kashmiri Śaiva schools, is, according to the *Vijñānabhairava*, illusory. Consciousness is not the universal recurrence of Spanda, it is the tranquility and rest within the Emptiness of the infinite expanse of Deity with which the liberated soul is one, like the wind that pervades the sky. Just as there is no Universal Spanda, so too there are no particular Spandas. The world is an illusion.

The Meditation on the Centre

The significance of the absence of the terms Spanda and others associated with it in the *Vijñānabhairava*, can be gauged in instances in which the same or a similar practice is taught in both *Vijñānabhairava* and the *Spandakārikā*. One is so prominent that it has come to characterize the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava*. I am referring to the contemplation (*bhāvanā*) of the centre between things, two objects, two breaths, two thoughts, two perceptions, and the like (see v. 26, 61–62 (61–62 (62–63), 103, 126)). The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches 'centreing' as a way of entering into consciousness free of thought constructs. The 'centre' enjoys a special prestige of its own. But although this

is experienced as an 'expansion in the centre' (*madhyavikāsa*) (verse 62 (61)), it is not the dynamic pulse—*spanda*—of consciousness. Here is a fine example of how a teaching is amplified by means of its hermeneutics. We observe this phenomenon throughout Abhinavagupta's treatment of the teachings of the *Mālinīvijayottara* and other Tantras.

According to Kṣemarāja, and he is quite right, the fundamental vision of reality from which the terminology of the Spanda system is derived at the scriptural level, is the Krama. To this we must add terms and primary concepts that the masters Somānanda, Utpaladeva and Abhinavagupta contributed. Basically, this involves examining and describing in detail the phases of the process of expansion and contraction of the pulse—*spanda*—of consciousness. Abhinavagupta initiates this majestic and extensive exegesis in his commentary (*vivaraṇa*) on the *Parātrīśikā*. He is well armed with the manner of depicting the dynamism of consciousness by the two masters of non-dualist Kashmir Śaivism. The first was Somānanda, who explained it as a flowing forth or extension (*prasara*). He stresses the first moment of perception or a bodily act as the point of contact between the infinite, non-conceptual pure conscious Śiva nature on the one side and manifestation—i.e. perception and its content—on the other. Utpaladeva says that consciousness is Light and its radiance or effulgence (*sphurattā*) is its shining as all things. As 'manifestations' (*ābhāsa*) arise and fall away at each instant of perception, Abhinavagupta, evidently wishing to integrate the Spanda teachings with the Pratyabhijñā, equates the 'effulgence' of the Light of consciousness, which is its scintillating 'flashing forth' (*spuraṇa*), with Spanda. Referring to the definition of the verbal root *spadi* from which the noun is derived, he says it is a 'subtle movement' (*kiñcitcalane*). It is subtle because on the one side we witness the movement of change from one perception to the next and yet there is no movement at all as there are no two points in space between which this movement occurs. According to the Spanda teachings, this is the experience of the 'unfolding of the centre'. Nothing of the sort is said about the Centre in the *Vijñānabhairava*. It is a state of perfect stillness (*nistaraṅga*).

The commentators, however, not uncommonly, add more dimensions to their explanations of the meditations and the reality on which they are based and to which they lead. Thus, Śivopādhyāya sees Spanda in the Centre, commenting on verse 26, where the Yogi is told that he should place his full attention on the centre between the two breaths—exhalation and inhalation—so that he no longer experiences their arising and falling away. Śivopādhyāya explains that:

'The sense here is as follows: having cast the aggregate of all the powers of vision and the rest (of the senses) into their own respective objects simultaneously and observed one's own innate nature, which is the Spanda principle, that is, their foundation, 'by the (one pointed) state free of thought'. (This is done) with the assembly of the senses that has opened up all at once (*akrama*) because the condition of forming intentions has ceased by the (rubbing together) of the firesticks of the emissions of both (currents of the breath) that have been grasped by blocking (them) on the plane of the centre that pervades simultaneously the states of contemplative absorption with the eyes open and eyes closed.'

The next meditation follows through. The base foundation and goal of practice is to abide in a state of pure tranquility. The power of the breath is tranquil whether it flows out or fills inwardly. The Tranquil One manifests by means of that same power. (v 27) Although we are certainly very close to the dynamic stillness of Spanda, the *Vijñānabhairava* has not yet reached it. It seems that the commentators were either not aware that the *Vijñānabhairava* considers that the absolute consciousness, that is Bhairava's body, is perfectly tranquil, or chose to ignore it. It appears that they considered that the 'waveless' condition, which is the clearly stated goal of all the meditations, when deeply understood, is Spanda. Ānandabhaṭṭa especially delights in quoting from the *Spandakārikā*, which he does eight times, whereas Śivopādhyāya does so just three.[31] As we have observed. It would not be surprising if Kṣemarāja also found occasion to do so in his commentary on the *Vijñānabhairava*.

To get back to our main point: no less, or even more important, centres are found in the domain of perception. Another meditation in the *Stanzas* that may well have been inspired by the *Vijñānabhairava* is the one that concerns *unmeṣa*–the unfolding of consciousness between two thoughts from which thought arises. One could say that the *Stanzas on Vibration* are a manual of meditations that serve as means to experience ultimate reality as dynamic stillness. In reality, this is a fundamental difference between the *Stanzas* and the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava*. The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that the goal is the attainment of Bhairava (= Śiva) consciousness (*Vijñānabhairava*) but understands that to be a state of perfect tranquillity (*śānta*) and fulfill-

[31] See appendix 3 concerning the texts quoted in the commentaries to the *Vijñānabhairava*.

ment (*pūrṇatā*).[32] Although mentioned less often, but no less important, is the Trika goddess Parā, who brings that realization about in a state of pure thought-free—*nirvikalpa*—consciousness. Whilst the *Vijñānabhairava* often refers to this and uses the term, contrasting it to the fettered condition of thought—*vikalpa*, this distinction which is so crucial to the teachings of the *Vijñānabhairava*, is not mentioned even once either in the *Stanzas* or the *Aphorisms*. Conversely, there is no reference to Spanda—the dynamism of consciousness—in the *Vijñānabhairava*.

Despite these fundamental differences, we have seen that the author of the *Stanzas* was so inspired by the *Vijñānabhairava* as to incorporate some meditations from it. Indeed, one of them came to characterize one of the most fundamental practices taught in the *Stanzas*. This is attentiveness to the experience of the unfolding of pure consciousness between one thought and the next. This is particularly well-suited to transposition from one to the other, notwithstanding fundamental differences. In the *Vijñānabhairava*, thought unfolds from and through the activity of the mind. In the *Stanzas*, this unfolding is the expanding, unfolding phase (*unmeṣa*) of the dynamic pulse of consciousness. It is from this that thought arises and into which it dissolves away in its phase of retraction or contraction (*nimeṣa*).

According to the *Vijñānabhairava*, thoughts are generated by the mind (*manas*) stimulated by intention (*saṁkalpa*) or desire (*icchā, abhilāṣa*). In the *Stanzas*, they are particular pulsations of consciousness (*viśeṣaspanda*). As such, they are amalgams of the Qualities (*guṇas*) that, according to Sāṁkhya doctrine, arise and fall away from within Prakṛti–Nature, which encompasses all that is objective. According to the *Vijñānabhairava*, this dynamism is so inferior to that of consciousness, of which it is just a part, that it does not affect it. Thoughts arise out of the Silence, free of thought, between thoughts that abides as such. In the *Stanzas*, this Silence is where Spanda is 'stable' and 'well established' (*supratiṣṭhita*). 'Well established' Spanda is universal (*sāmānya*) Spanda which is the permanence of Dynamic Stillness. The verses read as follows. The first is from the *Stanzas*:

> The expansion of consciousness (*unmeṣa*) that takes place when one is engaged in a single thought should be known to be the source from whence another arises. One should experience that for oneself.[33]

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[32] See VBh verse 148 (146).

[33] SpKā 41.

The equivalent meditation in the *Vijñānabhairava*:

> Having observed that a desire (has just) arisen, it should be put to rest immediately. Thus, it dissolves away there from whence it has come forth.[34]

According to the *Vijñānabhairava*, in the Centre, the yogi experiences pervasive, liberating, *nirvikalpa* Bhairava consciousness. According to the *Stanzas*, he experiences the universal pulse of consciousness (*sāmānyaspanda*). The unfolding and retraction (*unmeṣa* and *nimeṣa*) that gives rise to a thought construct and then withdraws it, is the particular (*viśeṣa*) pulse. Here, we have a fine example of how the stillness of *nirvikalpa* Bhairava consciousness in the *Vijñānabhairava* is realized to be the dynamism of Śiva consciousness in the *Stanzas*. Abhinava takes the third and final step by identifying Universal Spanda in the *Tantrāloka* with the dynamism of supreme subjectivity—*ahaṁbhāva*. This, he says, is the vitality of Mantra.[35] Here again, although the *Stanzas* know nothing of this higher dynamic subjectivity, we observe the precedent in the *Stanzas* where they declare that just as Spanda—the pulse of consciousness—is the driving, vitalizing force of the psychophysical organism, so is it of Mantra. It is into this that 'quiescent and stainless' Mantras, along with the senses and the mind, dissolve away and so partake of Śiva's nature (SpKā 26–27). Again, just as the *Vijñānabhairava* (v. 86 (85)) teaches that *nirvikalpa* consciousness pervades all the states of consciousness—waking, dreaming and deep sleep—so too the *Stanzas* declare that they are strung on the thread of the dynamic stillness of Śiva consciousness which is realized within the perceiving subjectivity (SpKā 3–5). In the midst of the dynamism of perception, its perfect tranquillity is never affected by any of it. Here, the adaptation is clear. While it is easy to understand how the states of consciousness are united by the common underlying stillness of *nirvikalpa*, it is harder to understand how a dynamic consciousness can work that way. From the *Stanzas* point of view, the adaptation of this teaching serves to underscore the unchanging, continuity and stillness of the dynamism of Spanda.

The Mastery of Dreams (*svapnasvātantrya*)

At least two more *Stanzas* are inspired by meditations from the *Vijñānabhairava*. One concerns 'the freedom to dream' (*svapnasvātantrya*). This

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[34] VBh 96 (95), cf. SpKā 41.

[35] TĀ 4/182cd-183.

expression appears in a variant of a verse in the *Vijñānabhairava* that declares that:

> 'Having meditated on the energy (of the breath) fat (with its natural sound) as well as weak (and lengthy) in the region of the twelve (finger space then), once entered into the heart (when falling asleep) whilst engaged (in this) meditation, (the yogi) attains mastery (over his dreams).'[36]

This practice has a precedent in the *Śivasūtra* that declares that 'by fixing the mind in the Heart, (the yogi) has a vision of the perceivable end of dreams.'[37] Bhāskara explains:

> 'The perceivable is the object of realization (*upalabhya*), that is, one's own awakened nature (*svasvarūpa*) free of obscuration, the attainment of which is said to be vision. (This) vision takes place here (in the Heart) when the delusion which induces dreams is destroyed and the awakened (yogi) pervades (all things) at all times by penetrating the Divine Seal (*divyamudrā* of enlightenment). (The yogi) of unawakened intellect (experiences only) a vision of dreams, which for the awakened is the freedom to dream as he wishes (*svapnasvātantrya*) (that he achieves) by drinking the lunar nectar (*soma* of *apāna*, the descending breath). This is the rending asunder of the darkness (of false egoity) and the arising of enlightened intuitive consciousness (*pratibhodaya*).'[38]

Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in his commentary on the *Spandakārikā*, which says:

> 'Requested by the will, the benefactor makes the Sun and Moon rise, and bestows on the embodied while they wake, the objects that are created in (their) heart. So also, in the dream state (Śiva), residing in the centre, manifests without exception, always and most vividly, the things (his devotee) desires, because he never desists from (his) prayerful request.'[39]

It is very likely that the author of the *Stanzas* knew the *Vijñānabhairava*. It appears that Rāmakaṇṭha, commenting on the *Stanzas*, also knew the verse

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[36] VBh 55.

[37] *hṛdaye cittasaṃghaṭṭād dṛśyasvāpadarśanam* ŚSūvi ad 1/15.

[38] Bhāskara's commentary in Dyczkowski 1992b: 42–46.

[39] SpKā 33–34.

we are examining with this variant, seeing, as does Kṣemarāja, its relevance to these verses in the *Stanzas*. Thus, in his commentary, he writes:

> '(The true yogi is one who), because he is intent every moment (on exercising his) reflective awareness (*pratyavamarśa*), never at any time, in the course of any experience, neglects the prayer he has achieved through his own innate power. (This prayer is his) merger with his own nature, the Benefactor and Lord of all. The Benefactor manifests for one such as he (who is not negligent in his prayer) the things he desires, even while he dreams, just as when he is awake. The things (he experiences) while dreaming that (seem to come about) freely, (independent of his will) do not restrict (his) own (inherent) power, which is that of universal agency. This is because he is (no longer) a worldly soul subject to rebirth, but he is free and creates them by (his) own power as he wishes. Just as Bhartṛhari says: 'The Lord of all, endowed with every power, dividing Himself by Himself and creating phenomena of various sorts, becomes, while dreaming, the enjoyer.' Therefore, this is called 'freedom to dream' (*svapnasvātantrya*), and as there is no difference for the (enlightened yogi) between waking and dreaming, this same (state) is said to be 'the destruction of the cover of darkness that obscures (consciousness).'[40]

The Void

The prominent, virtually dominant presence of Emptiness both as a means and the goal in many meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava* requires that we, first of all, enquire into what is meant by 'emptiness' here. The *Vijñānabhairava* repeatedly returns to the practice of meditation on Emptiness or the Void which it variously calls *śūnya*, with reference to the god, and *śūnyā* in the feminine with reference to the goddess. Other terms we find—*Kha, Gagana* and *Vyoman*—all literally mean 'sky' or space *Ākāśa*. The term in this sense translated into English deserves a capital letter if it is a proper name, although we do also find it in a general sense as a noun or even adjective.

The same term in various contexts denotes a range of realities or aspects of the one reality. Physical space, the sky, dreamless sleep, illusion, a dream as

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[40] Dyczkowski 1992a: 113 Lucid dreaming and its application to yogic practice in the context of the Spanda teachings is discussed in detail in Dyczkowski 1992a 241–245.

well as consciousness, both personal and universal, the perceiver and even objectivity can all be said to be 'empty'. Several meditations move from one form of Emptiness to another. Physical space gives way to spiritual space in the course of meditation as thought of the former disappears into the pure consciousness of the latter. Thus, according to his state of mind, the yogi moves from one Emptiness to another. The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches:

> Once the mind has been fixed on an external space, which is permanent, without support, empty, pervasive, and without a cause (*kalanojjhita*),[41] it enters (and is absorbed into the transcendent) absence of space (which is continuous uninterrupted consciousness).

Similarly:

> In the very same way, (the yogi) engaged in contemplating, for a long time, the (awesome) dark form (of the sky) on a dark (stormy) night during the dark lunar fortnight, (especially when there is no moon), attains Bhairava's nature.[42]

The darkness and expanse need not be outside. In the meditation that immediately follows, the yogi is instructed to view the darkness he sees when he closes his eyes. This too is a finite Void that can serve as a door to infinite Emptiness. Similarly, in the previous meditation, the yogi 'should imagine (*bhāvayet*) that the entire (expanse of the) sky is merged within (his) head as Bhairava's state. (Then, he and) all that (exists), penetrates (and is absorbed) into the reality (which is) the radiant energy (*tejas*) of Bhairava's form.'[43]

The same mediation can be practiced by directing one's attention to any space, even that of a room illumined by the sun during the day or a lamp at night, as is the sky during the day and at night. There the same transition can be made. In this case, into the Emptiness of the essential nature of the Self:

> 'One should direct one's gaze into the sky (or an empty space) that is variously illumined, for example, by the light of the sun (during the day), or a

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[41] The term *kalana* more commonly denotes the manner in which creation or manifestation takes place as a creative process of differentiation. That process is the cause of all things insofar as every single thing emerges as an effect by a process of differentiation from its cause.

[42] The two verses are, respectively, VBh 128 (126) and 87 (86).

[43] The two meditations are v. 88 (87) and 85 (84).

lamp (that shines at night) and the like. One's own essential nature manifests there itself.'[44]

Nor does the space need to be great for the Yogi to attend to it free of confinement, as is the space of the sky. He can cast his gaze into the empty space of a jar, for example, attending only to that and so setting aside its enclosing surfaces. Here too, he can make the transition from physical space to the unlimited expanse of consciousness. This happens, as always, by the dissolving away (*laya*) of the mind when thought ceases. The moment that happens, the yogi's consciousness becomes of that same nature. As Ānandabhaṭṭa explains:

> 'Having set aside the right and left sides and the rest of (the sides of) an object that has an inner cavity, such as a jar, and experienced that the mind has merged into the Supreme Void (of Śiva consciousness) beyond the Void (of the illusory universe) by resting there and being penetrated by the Supreme Brahman, one attains the Brahman itself.'[45]

As the yogi enters through the portal of physical and mental space into that of ultimate reality, whether Deity or the Self, he crosses over from outer objectivity into the unconfined expanse of the inner subjectivity. He should be able to move freely from one to the other, for the two, outer and inner space, are both Void. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches 'one should meditate on one's own Self in the form of the sky.'[46] In this way, the thinking (*savikalpa*) mind (*samanā*) that perceives physical or mental space turns into the thought-free (*nirvikalpa*) mind (*unmanā*) that perceives the inner space of consciousness, the essential nature of the Self, which is the Bhairava's nature, his state, power and radiant form. What is realised in the transition from finite to ultimate reality depends upon what is anticipated according to the directions of the Deity. The physical sky becomes the sky of consciousness, which is the absence of space (v. 128). The same Emptiness is experienced when we view a forest or a town from the top of a mountain. As the yogi goes on contemplating (*bhāvayan*) these Voids, he attains Bhairava's nature (v. 87 (86)) for they are all Bhairava's dark form or 'body' (*vapus*).

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[44] VBh v 76.

[45] VBh 59 (58) and commentary.

[46] VBh 92ab.

The emptiness can be of any of the objects of sense, not just sight. One meditation directs the attention to the emptiness of all the objects of sense as the senses unfurl into them to then fold back into themselves, like the play of the feathers of a peacock (v. 32). Another meditation directs the yogi to practice meditation (*bhāvanā*) on the Void which is the silence at the end of Sound:

> 'O Bhairavī, by uttering a *praṇava* or the like and by meditating on the Void at the end of (its) prolated sound,[47] (the yogi) attains Emptiness by means of the Void, which is (Śiva's) supreme power.'

Indeed, the entire universe is the Void into which the mind dissolves away (58). The Void is no-place and yet is everywhere. The bridge between the two—the universe and the Void—is the absence of objects. The former may be physical, as is the space that objects leave behind in their absence or even mental, the other is cognitive, in which objectivity itself is absent. The 'non-being' or 'non-existence' of something is simply the absence of that particular object as it can be of a multitude of them. I look at a chair and I can be aware that nobody is sitting on it. I look at a wall and am aware that it is blank, featureless. As I stare out into the sky at night, or from a spaceship, into deep space, I can experience directly the 'non-being' of all the possible things that could populate it. Indeed, it is the 'non-being' of everything that is not there. Again, I can look at an object, see it and yet be aware that nothing else exists there. Without any kind of extraordinary perception yogis and the like possess, I can experience total, one could say, absolute 'non-existence'. It is 'absolute' because it lacks any of the qualities of finite entities. They have a form, exist at a certain time and in a particular location, they possess dimensions and other physical properties, weight, colour and the like. The 'non-existence' we experience has none of these. It is unconfined and without beginning or end—it is eternal. This is what one could call 'objective emptiness'.

Consciousness is also 'empty' and 'void' in the same way as is 'non-existence'. It is an absence of all things, because consciousness is not a 'thing'. Many schools of thought in India, like Advaita Vedānta or Sāṁkhya, are of the view that it is intrinsically devoid of any possible characteristics, at least any that could characterize it as would an object. Indeed, many go so far as to claim that it cannot be characterized even as a subject. This is not the view of

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[47] *plutānte śūnyabhāvanāt* this verse is VBh 39.

the *Vijñānabhairava* that teaches that that Emptiness is Deity, its power and the cessation of all the illusion of objectivity. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* directs that the two, the Emptiness of consciousness and non-being, should be contemplated as the perceiver who cannot be perceived, that is, as Bhairava:

> That which is not an object of knowledge, that cannot be grasped, that is Void and is present in the absence (of things) (*abhāvaga*), should all be contemplated (*bhāvya*) as Bhairava. (Finally,) at the end (and culmination) of that (meditation, the realized yogi experiences) the birth of (awakened) consciousness.[48]

Again, it can be the emptiness of any of the objects of sense, not just sight. More than one meditation directs the yogi to meditate on the Void, which is the silence at the end of Sound:

> O Bhairavī, by uttering a *praṇava* (like Oṁ) or the like and by meditating on the void at the end of (its) prolated sound (*plutānte śūnyabhāvanāt*), (the yogi) attains Emptiness by means of the Void which is (Śiva's) supreme power.[49]

Clearly, according to the *Vijñānabhairava*, consciousness is cognitive, but, as we have seen, it is not dynamic. Perception takes place by means of the instruments of perception, physical and mental. But, nonetheless, consciousness is cognitive. This is why, as we shall see further ahead, the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava* remind us of those of the Buddhist Mahāmudrā which is based on the Buddhist idealist Yogācāra view. They are also similar to the Kaula Kālī Krama because they are all non-dualist and teach that reality is one dynamic cognitive consciousness engaged in perceiving the universe of the forms of its own inscrutable emptiness generated in and through its cognitive activity. The big difference being that the images generated by the activity of consciousness, according to the Buddhists, are illusory.

Just as non-dualist Tantric Śaiva schools have a tempered actual or potentially realist view of the world, the same is with the vision of the Siddhas of

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[48] VBh 127 (125) *yad avedyaṃ yad agrāhyaṃ yac chūnyaṃ yad abhāvagam | tatsarvaṃ bhairavaṃ bhāvyaṃ tadante bodhasaṃbhavaḥ* || 127|| Concerning 'Non-being' as a characterization of Śiva as the absolute, see Dyczkowski 2004: 51 ff.

[49] VBh v 39.

the idealist Mahāmudrā, as we can see from the brief summary of its salient features by Dowman that follows. Worth noting, is the value given to the appreciation of beauty. This is in sharp contrast to the austere illusionism of the Middle Way presented in the *Prajñāparamitāsūtra* although, there too, the illusion is expressed subtly as ineffability rather than outright non-existence. The Tantras accepted as major authorities by the votaries of Mahāmudrā, for example, the *Hevajratantra*, quote the *Prajñāparamitā* and other Buddhist *sūtra*s as authorities for the view that the world is illusory. At the same time, they also allow for aesthetic and ecstatic experience—*ānanda*, commonly said to be of four levels. We find the same celebration of the blissfulness of consciousness and experience it through the medium of objective experience. Much of what Dowman writes concerning the metaphysics of the teachings of the Buddhist Siddhas, that is, Mahāmudrā, applies to the view in the *Vijñānabhairava*. We apperceive in these communalities what we refer to somewhat vaguely and loosely as Tantra. In this perspective, the illusoriness of the world is attenuated by these Buddhists as it is by the *Vijñānabhairava*. Dowman writes:

> 'In a non-dual philosophy, absolute reality is everyday experience, which is unutterable, thus the siddhas' disdain of speculative metaphysics .... They had no concept of it and no knowledge of it; it cannot be conceived and the temporal mind cannot comprehend it. It is indefinable, indeterminate and without location. *Tathatā* is perhaps the most evocative word for it. It means 'that-ness' or 'such-ness' 'the absolute specific'. This universe is a grain of sand. It is the ungraspable essence that poets and musicians have sought .... But it has no cause and no root, and is therefore said to be unborn and 'pure potential'. It is the cosmic totality and sesame seed. A seed or an egg is often used to symbolize it.[50] ... Since reality is utterly indeterminable, there is no truth in any concept of absolute truth whatsoever, and the rela-

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[50] Cf. Ānandabhaṭṭa commenting on v. 54 says, 'Parā clearly manifests externally all that is present within (consciousness in a potential form) like the juices of a peacock's egg'. Śivānanda and Kṣemarāja refer to the state of potency of consciousness in this way. On the Hindu side, this analogy of the juices of the peacock's egg appears already in the cognitive grammarian Bhartṛhari. From a Buddhist perspective, we should not understand Emptiness as the substance of a cause. It means that it is a condition of pure potential. Like the present which can be followed by any number of future events.

tive phenomena that are inseparable from it are a lie, until they are recognized as reality.' ... 'If the siddhas' experience is a continuum of space, if all things are emptiness (*śūnyatā*), if there is only clear light, where are sensual objects, the material universe? This paradox is answered by the single most important formula in Mahāyāna metaphysics, 'emptiness' is 'form' and 'form' is 'emptiness'. Emptiness is nothing if not form and the absolute specific is certainly not nothing, when all things dissolve into space and are seen as space, substance remains as a rainbow, or better as a hologram. The very attractive Mahāyāna proposition that nothing exists outside the sensual and mental realms, affirms that absolute reality is to be found in the common light of day, that emptiness is form. Constant experience of the absolute specific implies non-dual perception, union of subject/object, knower/known, self/other.'[51]

A major consequence of this idealist perspective is the strong emphasis on the practice of meditation. Thus, all such idealist views, Buddhist or Śaiva, preach, in the context of their own traditions, that ritual is not essential and that the way to realization is through empowered meditative practice. Indeed, most of the many meditations on Emptiness in the *Vijñānabhairava* could also be Buddhist, where it is not that Emptiness is identified with Deity. Thus, one meditation directs that the mind, individual consciousness, the vital breath, along with the limited Self, should disappear into the Emptiness of non-conceptual consciousness (138). If the result were to be simply their cessation without residue or just pure consciousness, the meditation denying as it does the Self, would be totally Buddhist. However, although the meditation does culminate in the manifestation of the Void, it is identified with Bhairava's body.[52] The commentators steer away from a Buddhist interpretation by saying that this is a meditation for one who is about to die and so lose his present personal identity.

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[51] Keith Dowman 1980: Masters of Mahāmudrā. Songs and Histories of the Eighty-four Buddhist Siddhas. State University of New York Press p. 9 and 10.

[52] *mānasaṃ cetanā śaktir ātmā ceti catuṣṭayam |*
yadā priye parikṣīṇaṃ tadā tad bhairavaṃ vapuḥ || 138 ||

O Dear One, if the group of four, namely, (all that is) mental (*mānasa*), (intellectual) awareness (*cetanā*), the energy (of the vital breath) (*śakti*) and the (individual) self (*ātman*), wanes away completely, then that (which remains) is Bhairava's body (*vapus*). (138) (136)

There are a few other meditations that are practically Buddhist just as they stand. Amongst them are the meditations on the non-existence of the mind. This is the condition in which conceptual consciousness (*vikalpa*) turns into pure, non-conceptual consciousness (*nirvikalpa*). In the absence of mind, there is no thought, just as there is no mind in the absence of thought. There is no difference between the Buddhist and the Śaiva as far as that goes, although the latter admittedly considers that consciousness in that condition is the Self, which the Buddhists, of course, would not admit.[53] One meditation begins with a direct critique of the existence of the Self. Just as action involves a change in the agent, so too perception in the perceiver. How can an immutable, eternal Self act or perceive? In other words, the perceiver or agent we experience ourselves to be cannot be ultimately real. It is just a semblance—a momentary coming together of causes and conditions. I think that I perceive and act, but actually, it is the psychophysical organism that does so. The Buddhist attends to this paradox—that is—seeming and actual impossibility. If that were not enough, the same meditation directs the yogi to further realise that without a perceiver, perception itself is not possible and so, the perception we have of the world is illusory and with it the world itself. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches in one of its concluding verses:

> '"All this (universe) is without reality, like a magic show (*indrajāla*), for what reality is there in a magic show?" By the firmness (of this conviction), one attains peace. How can an immutable Self possess knowledge or action? (And yet all) external entities depend on perception (*jñāna*) (in order to be known). (Clearly,) therefore, this universe is empty (of any existence of its own).'[54]

The Magic Show of Māyā, the Cosmic Illusion

The Emptiness of consciousness is its unlimited expanse. It has no body, senses nor mind and its constructs. It is free of all the limitations of objectivity

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[53] *cittādyantaḥkṛtir nāsti mamāntar bhāvayed iti |*
vikalpānām abhāvena vikalpair ujjhito bhavet || 94 ||

(The yogī) should reflect that "there is no inner (mental) organ within me, whether mind (intellect or ego)." (Thus), because there are no thoughts (also), (the yogī) is devoid of them. (94) (93)

[54] VBh 133–134 (131–132).

like a sky without horizons. But it is not an insentient, empty space. Quite the contrary, it is Deity, omnipresent and powerful as it is transcendent. The Emptiness of the world and all things is their illusory nature, empty as are the images in a dream, deceptive like a conjuring trick. This is so central to the teaching of the *Vijñānabhairava* that it is stated at the very beginning that:

> 'Whatever is composite is said to be a form of Bhairava, which, O Goddess, is deceptive like Indra's magic, because it has no essence. It is like Māyā (illusion) or a dream, a figment of the imagination (like) the city of Gandharvas (in the sky).'[55]

Even Mantra, which is considered to be the most advanced form of outer spiritual practice, is no less illusory. Even in its most refined, elevated form ranging through the higher levels of Sound that ultimately merge into Silence. Accordingly, having begun by stating that the world is like a magic show, Bhairava goes on to refer to the most important Trika Mantras, that is, Navātman of Bhairava and the three vidyās of the triadic Trika Goddess. Referring to the Mantras that are conceived to embody the deity, even these are only provisionally real—just a ploy to inspire and instigate to practice. Thus, Bhairava goes on to say that:

> These (notions of the Deity's nature) are for those whose intellect has not awakened, (that serve to dispel their doubts that are like) the things that frighten children. All (this) is said to impel (them) to act (for their own advancement) like a sweet that a mother (offers a child).[56]

The *Vijñānabhairava* suggests that this teaching pervades all the meditations by directing the yogi again towards the end of their presentation to reflect on the illusoriness of the world. The suffering of daily life is the result of not knowing this. But by viewing that all things are illusory, one experiences the inherent bliss of consciousness that is free of that delusion.

> Contemplating the universe as a magic show, or projected (*nyasta*) (onto a canvas), like (painting) a picture, or in (constant) motion: viewing everything (in this way, one experiences) the emergence of bliss.[57]

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[55] *VBh* 8 cd-9.

[56] *Ibid.* 13.

[57] *Ibid.* 102 (101).

The following meditation offers a more sophisticated way of understanding the illusory nature of the world. The yogi is directed to attend to the nature and qualities of the reality levels (*tattva*) from Māyā, that deludes, down to Earth. He progresses through them successively, reflecting on their nature one by one and so discovers that the higher is the cause that pervades the lower. Thus, the principles from Māyā downwards are pervaded by it just as they are caused by it and essentially made of it. As the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches:

> 'Māyā is deluding. The systematic operation (*kalana*) of the Force (of limited agency) (*kalā*) (and the other *kañcukas*) goes on (functioning by itself)–discerning (*kalayan*) this and the other properties of the reality principles (*tattva*) (with detachment), the individual soul (*nā*) is separated (from them).'[58]

The reason the world of objectivity is illusory and the way that we can experience that is so, is the inextricable connection between perception and its object. Realists would say that the ground, and basis of perception and what appears within it, is an outer object that exists independently of it. The idealist does not agree. The *Vijñānabhairava* echoes his view that perceptions have no independent cause. There is no outer object and so what appears to be so is an illusion. The *Vijñānabhairava* goes a step further by declaring that perception does not belong to a perceiver. Both polarities, perceiver and perceived, are illusory. Were it to leave it at that, it would be indistinguishable from the Buddhist view. But the *Vijñānabhairava* steers away from that extreme and becomes squarely Śaivite by promising that when the yogi realizes that, he will realize his identity with Śiva (v. 99 (98)). For the yogi, whose mind is free from thought, the body and the universe, everything is made of consciousness (v. 63 (62)). That can either mean that everything is as real as consciousness or, as the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches, the universe is the Void into which the mind has dissolved away (v. 58 (57)). In that perspective, it is, as Ānandabhaṭṭa puts it, imaginary 'like the city of celestial musicians. It is (a mental) projection called 'nonexistence' and the like, devoid of name and form, the abyss of Māyā.' And yet, as Śivopādhyāya puts it, commenting on the same verse: 'The universe is empty. It has reached the state of the Void (of

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[58] VBh v 95 (94). See Śivopādhyāya's commentary.

consciousness) beyond the Void (of the illusory world).[59] Merger there is the state of oneness.'

Subject and Object

Although the universe is illusory, nonetheless, everything is consciousness. As usual, meditation serves as the means to grasp in one's mind the deeper understanding of the true nature of reality. Accordingly, the practice of those less advanced is guided by the realization of the most fully advanced, which is Bhairava Himself, who teaches how to experience things to be in conformity with how they truly are. Successful in that, the yogi awakes:

> One should reflect all at once (simultaneously) with the mind free of thought that all the body or the universe is just (*hi*) made of consciousness; (thus, the yogi attains) the supreme Awakening![60]

Just as consciousness is in one's own body and knowing that, it awakens, so too by realising that that is so in others' bodies also:

> The one whose nature (*dharma*) is consciousness is present in all bodies; there is no difference anywhere. Thus, a person engaged in contemplating (*bhāvayan*) everything as being of that nature conquers phenomenal existence.[61]

The third step is to cultivate the awareness that consciousness is not just present in sentient bodies, it is present in every single thing:

> "Consciousness or will and the rest are not (only) within me, they are (also) present in jars and other (objects)." Meditating in this way on the omnipresent (Reality), one becomes all-pervading.[62]

Cultivating this meditative state (*bhāvanā*) ultimately leads to identification with Bhairava who fills all things and is perfectly full and complete. This

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[59] The Void beyond the Void (*śūnyātiśūnya*) is the Void of Śiva consciousness that transcends the Void of the illusory manifest world.

[60] *VBh* 63 (62).

[61] *VBh* 100 (99).

[62] *Ibid.* 105 (104).

is the fourth and final step. It is the goal, which is that of maintaining awareness of the presence of consciousness everywhere. Consciousness is everything and so is a state of perfect plenitude that not only includes the perceiver or what he experiences, it is also the senses and all the means through which he perceives it. Accordingly, the *Vijñānabhairava* directs the way one, who is successful, experiences the activity of the senses:

> 'Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of the senses, (their object) dissolves away within consciousness and so, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude (as all things, manifests as the yogi's true nature).'[63]

Each step and aspect is realized when the mind is free of thought and, conversely, as it is realized and the yogi awakens to thought-free (*nirvikalpa*) consciousness, the mind and its products, of which it is made, dissolve away into pure Bhairava consciousness. In this way, rising out from the illusion and sleep of thought the yogi attains the supreme awakening.[64] What is this consciousness? Idealist Buddhists would say that just as it is not objective, it is also not subjective either. This could not be the view here. Indeed, the *Vijñānabhairava* defines the yogi as one who pays careful attention to the relationship between subject and [65] and Śivopādhyāya emphasizes attention to the subject. One who is not a yogi experiences the relationship between subject and object no less than the yogi, but his attention is predominantly directed to the object and thus, fails to attend to the relationship between them. In this way, he attenuates Ānandabhaṭṭa's view that stresses that by paying attention to their relationship the objective polarity is discovered to be illusory. Thus, he comments saying:

> "I am the one who recollects and so (my) nature is the Light (of consciousness) at all times. What is other than that is the object of perception which is said to be impermanent and (ultimately) unreal."[66]

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[63] Ibid. 117 (115).
[64] VBh 63 (62).
[65] VBh 106 (105).
[66] Ānandabhaṭṭa ad VBh 106 (105).

The Illusory World of *Savikalpa* and the Deity-Consciousness of *Nirvikalpa*

These inconsistencies underscore how the ontological status of the world is a problem for the *Vijñānabhairava* and as a result also for the commentators and ourselves. The *Vijñānabhairava*'s basic and strongly dominant view is that the world is illusory. As we have seen, this is stated several times in varying perspectives. However, it also says that it is substantially the same as Deity and consciousness, like the flame and fire, the sea and the waves, the rays and the sun. Simply stated, they are Śiva and Śakti.[67] Similarly, personal identity, and to what degree it is illusory, is also a problem that is variously tackled, not always consistently. These ambiguities are even stronger for the commentators who are free to use the exegetical tools developed by the earlier Kashmiri masters that are unknown to the *Vijñānabhairava*. Both commentators accept the dominant view that the world is an illusion as the main one, but they cannot resist referring to the Pratyabhijñā view that it is the manner in which the Light of consciousness shines. The occasional reference to Advaita Vedānta is not a problem, indeed it supports the dominant view, even though the manner the world is considered to be illusory differs. Advaita Vedānta understands the plurality and duality of the world to be the result of ignorance of the oneness of the Brahman. A theme to which it constantly returns. The *Vijñānabhairava*, on the other hand, hardly refers to ignorance as a factor here. Instead, it repeatedly highlights the contrast between the illusory world of conceptualization—*savikalpa*—and the reality of Deity consciousness experienced free of conceptualization—*nirvikalpa*. This is not a small difference. The world according to the Advaita Vedānta is illusory, in the sense of transient and insubstantial and, as such, is essentially painful. In a nutshell, 'everything is suffering' (*sarvaṁ duḥkham*). But this is not at all so according to the *Vijñānabhairava*, on the contrary:

> '(The yogi) should recollect that the whole universe or his own body is filled all at once (simultaneously) with his own (innate) bliss. (Then), by the nectar of his own (innate nature) alone, he becomes supreme bliss.[68]

Here, as elsewhere, the body and the universe are taken together. One is, as is, the other—both are equally consciousness (v 63 (62)). If everything is bliss,

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[67] *VBh* 18–19, 21, 110 (109) cf also Kaumudi ad 96 (95).

[68] *VBh* 65 (63).

how can the world be a painful and deceitful illusion? Ānandabhaṭṭa sidesteps the problem by focusing on the *nirvikalpa* aspect–the blissful Brahman that is the source of all things. It is this that is perpetually blissful. Another way to understand that bliss pervades the universe without compromising its illusoriness for the yogi is that it is the pure *nirvikalpa* consciousness within which the worldly *vikalpa*s stream as is formulated by Utpaladeva in the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā* where he writes:

> By recognizing that "I am (the one) who possesses this glory (that manifests as all things)", he who is all things is endowed with the Great Lord's state even when thought constructs are spreading forth.[69]

Śivopādhyāya prefers to quote the well-known passage from the *Vājasaneyabrāhmaṇa* that declares that:

> 'This (world) is full (and complete) as is that (transcendent reality). What is full (and complete) arises from the full (and complete). Taking the full from what is full, only the full remains.'[70]

He goes on to add that: 'Here (according to our view) it is because the universe also, which is the condensed juice (*rasa*) (of the aesthetic delight) of consciousness, manifests and so 'all the body is made of consciousness ...'[71] Here Śivopādhyāya supports a fully emanationist view. The universe and consciousness, its transcendental source, issue forth into and from one another, as each other. This is the very opposite of an illusionist view of the world. This image is taken from the Veda. Kashmiri exegetes express this pantheism on the analogy of light that has been brilliantly worked out by Utpaladeva in his philosophy of the Pratyabhijñā. Although virtually absent in the *Vijñānabhairava* itself, we find several instances in the presentation of its commentators. So, for example Śivopādhyāya says:

> '(One should reflect) all at once (simultaneously) on all the universe with a mind free of thought constructs, all around, inside and outside as pervaded

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[69] *sarvo mamāyaṁ vibhava ityevaṁ parijānataḥ |*
viśvātmano vikalpānāṁ prasare.api maheśatā || ĪP 4/1/12

[70] *oṃ pūrṇam adaḥ pūrṇam idaṃ pūrṇāt pūrṇam udacyate |*
pūrṇasya pūrṇam ādāya pūrṇam eva avaśiṣyate || Īśā Upaniṣad

[71] Above, v 63a.

by the wonder of vibrantly radiant consciousness. The appearing (literally 'shining' of things) is not separate from the light (of consciousness) because (if it were to be) otherwise, it would not be possible to perceive (anything) objectively.' Thus, one should reflect on that, in accord with this line of reasoning, namely that the light (of consciousness) shines (as all things).'[72]

Ānandabhaṭṭa also talks about the 'vibrant' consciousness that pervades everything but stops short of saying that it manifests as everything. The Light meant here is at once that of the Self and the Deity. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* directs: '(The yogi) possesses infinite Light once known Bhairava's nature as the waking and the other (states),' Ānandabhaṭṭa explains:

> 'Having meditated initially on duality (as exemplified by the doubt one may have, viewing a standing figure in the darkness): "(Is this a) pillar or a man?" Then (on the) external light of the moon and sun etc., then darkness—having meditated that all that is Bhairava's form because He is pluriform, (the Yogi) becomes Bhairava who is infinite Light.'[73]

The analogy of light as shining as the things illumined by it is not commonly found in the *Vijñānabhairava* that much prefers Emptiness, illusion, consciousness or best of all perception or 'knowledge' (*jñāna*):

> Everything (in this world) is illumined by knowledge and by virtue (that it is) all (things), the Self is the illuminator. Knowledge alone, as its nature is one, is perceived to be the object of knowledge.[74]

Making full use of the principle of oneness as a union of polarities, the Pratyabhijñā assigns a very subtle and sophisticated meaning to them. The light is the power-holder of the power which is its freedom—*svātantrya*—to shine as all things and yet remain one. In cognitive terms, this is its *vimarśa*—reflective awareness—by virtue of which it knows itself and what appears within it. We come close to that with the Goddess Parā, who is the power of the Void of Bhairava consciousness. But it is not the same. Considering the extensive use of this and related terminology by the Kashmiri masters, their total absence in the *Vijñānabhairava* is striking.

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[72] *VBhU* ad v. 63 (62).

[73] *VBh* 86ab (85ab) and *Kaumudī*.

[74] *VBh* 137 (135).

Even so, feeling that this absence is to be compensated by their exegesis, we come across a number of examples of how the commentators elaborate on the view of the *Vijñānabhairava* in order to align it with the Pratyabhijñā. It must be said, however, that they do so with relative discretion, if we compare with Kṣemarāja's introduction which throws everything he has got of his exegetical toolbox into it. We will select a few examples which should speak for themselves. The first one is typical of the praxis of the *Vijñānabhairava*. Foremost and first of all, the mind should be emptied of all thought constructs. It is important to be clear that all thoughts are grounded in objectivity. There are no 'subjective thoughts' in the same sense that there are 'objective thoughts'. Objects, physical or mental, can be objects, but subjects cannot. The *Vijñānabhairava* understands the individual self to be made of thought. As such, it is objective to some degree. When thoughts cease, the individual self, disappears and the Supreme Self, which is pure consciousness, emerges recognized to be Bhairava:

> Freeing the mind of (all) support (of outer objective perceptions) one should not conceive (any) thoughts. O gazelle-eyed one, then (the individual) self is (merged into) the Supreme Self and so is (recognized to be) Bhairava.[75]

According to Śivopādhyāya, this is the first step to realization, namely, the transcendental identification with Bhairava. The next step completes it by the realization that all things are generated from Bhairava. Thus, he writes: 'explaining the two-fold recognition in accord with this teaching, namely, (the realization that) "I am He" is the essential nature of pure awakened consciousness and "this universe is my creative expansion (*sphāra*)", he explains the first aspect (*pratīka*), namely, "I am he."'

Here again, as in several other places, the commentator is not content to let the text speak for itself. It is quite clear and there can be no doubt that the *Vijñānabhairava* is teaching that the mind should be freed from thought, that is all. The rest follows. However, Śivopādhyāya cannot resist examining the process by which this takes place according to the Pratyabhijñā, thus introducing the concept we have seen is entirely absent in the *Vijñānabhairava*, as it is anywhere prior to Utpaladeva who introduced it, namely that of the superego (*pūrṇāhantā, ahaṁbhāva*). Thus, he quotes Utpaladeva as saying:

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[75] VBh 108 (107).

'Recognizing that "I am (the one) who possesses this glory (that manifests as all things)," even when the thought constructs of (the Lord), who is the universe, are a flow (His state as) the Great Lord (persists).'[76]

The same need to align the *Vijñānabhairava* with Pratyabhijñā also grips Ānandabhaṭṭa from time to time. Thus, he quotes the same verse in his commentary in another place equally gratuitously. There (in verse 29), the meditation is on an ascent of Kuṇḍalinī, which when it reaches the summit in the End of the Twelve, the Great Awakening dawns. This completely open statement referred, no doubt, originally to the realization of the ultimate reality taught in the *Vijñānabhairava*, which we have seen repeatedly is Bhairava and the range of associated homologous realities. But here Ānandabhaṭṭa chooses to explain the ultimate reality of the Pratyabhijñā which is, as he says, 'the reflective awareness of (the supreme subject free of objectivity experienced as Bhairava's absolute) Ego (*ahaṃ*).'

Both commentators understand that the sound of the breath—*ahaṃ*—is ultimately supreme egoity (*ahaṁbhāva*). It is a natural representation of the interaction of the polarities of light and awareness of the ultimate understanding of the polarities of Śiva and Śakti. Thus, Śivopādhyāya declares that 'many have explained that here within the universal I-ness which is the oneness of Śiva and Śakti (is true bliss)' (ad v 104). Ultimate reality is a state of the most profound and full contemplation. While the *Vijñānabhairava* certainly endorses that teaching, it does not enter into much detail as to what that contemplation is. Śivopādhyāya[77] is quick to fill in the details with classic Pratyabhijñā concepts. He writes:

> 'Contemplation' is the reflecting awareness 'within the supreme state', that is, within one's own essential nature that fills everything. It is 'experienced', that is, comes about in the form of 'I myself am the Supreme Haṃsa, Śiva, the supreme cause.'[78] That is '(unstruck) Sound', the deity who should be repeatedly recited, the nature of which is the reflective awareness of the uncreated ego. The connected sense is that the contemplation that is generated (thereby) is the repeated recitation of Mantra.'[79]

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[76] ĪP 4/1/1quoted in by VBhU ad v. 108 (107). Also Kaumudī ad v 29.

[77] Śivopādhyāya ad v 144cd-145 (142cd-143).

[78] SvT 4/399cd.

[79] VBhU ad 144cd-145 (142cd-143).

Śivopādhyāya, somewhat failing to discern that there are differences in views also amongst non-dualist Śaiva and Śākta schools that we collectively refer to as Kashmir Śaivism, declares that 'the Lord is contemplated in every book (of our tradition) as the (supreme) ego (*ahaṃrūpa*).' (ad v. 105 (104)) This is not completely true. We have already noted that this concept, which has become a hallmark of Kashmiri Śaivism, did not exist prior to Utpaladeva. Prior to him, everybody was very careful to transcend the subjectivity of the common ego that must be abandoned. Accordingly, Śivopādhyāya quotes Tapasvin as saying:

> 'The demon of ego (*ahaṃ*) who craves the blood (that flows) when the mental stability of people has been torn asunder by the very jagged (and sharp) fangs of egoity is reduced to the condition of a slave just by recollecting You.'[80]

Śivopādhyāya launches into a discussion concerning the nature of personal identity. He highlights, on the one side, the Buddhist view that the belief in an independently existing Self is the very essence of ignorance and, as such, the root cause of all suffering. At the other extreme is the belief taught in 'our books' that the sense of Self is an absolute ego. In between is the more common view that the ego of false pride and mistaken identification is so supremely painful that it must be abandoned. But this is extremely hard to do, so much so that it requires the intervention of the Deity's grace, with which it would be impossible.

According to Śivopādhyāya, 'This (supreme) ego is the unlimited plane, that is, complete (and perfect) subjectivity (*pūrṇāhantā*).'[81] By saying this, he revises the earlier view common to the Krama system that the individual ego (not an absolute ego) is the highest of the organs of sense and the pervasive controller of them all. According to the Krama system, once this is experienced, it dissolves into the Void of consciousness that is Without Ego (*nirahaṃkāra*), Without Support (*niralamba*) of objectivity or, indeed, subjectivity, Location (or conventional representation (*niḥsaṃketa*), Unnameable and Inexplicable (*anākhya*). One is reminded of Ramana Maharishi, who taught that:

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[80] *Uddyota* ad 104.

[81] *ayam ahaṃkāraḥ aparimitāhaṃbhūmiḥ, pūrṇāhantā ity arthaḥ* | ad v 90

'The thought "who am I?" will destroy all other thoughts, and like the stick used for the stirring-up of a burning pyre, it will itself in the end get destroyed. Then, there will arise self-realisation.'

The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches how to attend to sensations and perceptions in a natural, spontaneous way without attending to details or grasping at particulars as if staring into empty space. This leads to the 'dissolving away' of the mind. Without referring to anything the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches, Ānandabhaṭṭa declares that:

'(Then the yogi) considers himself to be the oneness which is the essential nature of subjectivity (*ahaṃrūpatādātmyābhimāna*) there, wherever it may be, by the oneness of (his) reflective awareness of the supreme plane (of existence).'

Ānandabhaṭṭa teaches here in Pratyabhijñā terms that the practice of merger is essentially the experience of subjectivity that is progressively strengthened to the degree to which objectivity is experienced as being one with it. He goes on to quote a passage from the *Spandakārikā* to establish that this practice of perceiving the individual soul to be one with all things is also taught there.

'The perception of objectivity (*idam iti*) is the completion of the purpose of conditioned awareness. Or else repose in one's own innate nature is the reflective awareness that "I am he"'.[82]

Here is another example by Śivopādhyāya:

(Bhairava's body is) the light (of consciousness) and (its) reflective awareness. It is (its) two-fold nature as Śiva and Śakti, that is, as (the substance) that possesses attributes and (its) attributes (respectively). It is (thus) said to become clearly evident as it truly is, as just one reality.[83]

In making this statement, Śivopādhyāya uses the basic exegetical tool furnished by Utpaladeva to unpack the scriptural concepts of Śiva and Śakti. He does so without thinking that these concepts are absent in the *Vijñānabhairava* itself. This would not matter except for the fact that in Utpaladeva's formula-

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[82] *APS* v. 15.

[83] *Śivopādhyāya's commentary on v 25.*

tion *vimarśa*—reflective awareness—is the dynamic polarity of the dynamic stillness of consciousness. That is, its Light, which accounts for a real manifestation—'shining appearance'—of the world of perceptions. Or else we can take him to mean that he accepts the reality of the world to be a 'quality' or attribute (= power) of Śiva. Surely, in that case, it cannot be that Śiva's quality is an illusory world, for that would make Him equally so.

There are just a few instances in which the supreme reality is identified by the two Sanskrit commentators as 'I' consciousness (*ahaṁbhāva*). More often we come across terminology that is compatible with the concept of a luminous, dynamic effulgent consciousness, as we find in the main non-dualist Kashmiri Śaiva schools. But this is not a major presence. Both commentators stick to the fundamental concept that the world is an illusory appearance—a product of mistaken thought constructs, if it were the effulgence of the light of consciousness, the thought constructs formed with it would not generate a false world, rather, they register it in conceptual terms irradiated by the same effulgence. This effulgence Śivopādhyāya identifies with the Goddess Parā. She is the pulse (*spanda*) who repeatedly reappears in critical junctures to explain fundamental practice and its experience. So, for example, explaining how the yogi should fill the two places of the origin of the exhaled and inhaled breath, Śivopādhyāya says:

> 'By filling' there, that is, by means of Bhairava's power, which is the perpetually unfolding, initial radiant pulse of (consciousness), (the yogi attains) the state of fullness, that is, Bhairava's state becomes manifest.[84]

We have lost most of Ksemarāja's commentary but, as we have noted already, he makes full use of this terminology and the exegetical tools. So, most probably, he did the same throughout his commentary, taking for granted that the *Vijñānabhairava* follows the same line of thought.

Further Reflections on the Ontology of *Vijñānabhairava*

Divested of all added exegesis, it is difficult to make a sound assessment of the *Vijnānabhairava*'s ontology. Although it is clearly stated in a number of places that the world is illusory and the way it is said to be Void supports that view. And yet, we are also told that Bhairava is pluriform. If he is all the states of

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[84] *Uddyota* ad 24.

consciousness and consciousness itself, surely, he must be their contents also. Or, at least, the source of them. In verse 110 (109), it is said that the universe is one with Bhairava and emerges out of him like waves from the sea, flames from fire or the rays of light from the sun. The waves are of the same substance as the sea as are the rays of the sun. Clearly, there appears to be a contradiction here. Is the *Vijñānabhairava* illusionist or polytheistic? To put it another way, from this perspective, the illusory universe is a flux of conceptualization (*vikalpa*) that ebbs and flows from the sea of consciousness free of all thought constructs (*nirvikalpa*). But if that is so, the mistake is not that the universe is unreal–just 'empty' if it is not realized to be Bhairava's form, which is also Emptiness.

Used to presenting the non-dualism of Kashmiri Śaiva schools in general as largely steering clear of characterizing the world as illusory, when confronted with the passages in the *Vijñānabhairava* that declare the world to be a deception, we pretend not to see them or quietly explain them away. But there can be no denying the fact that the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that the world is illusory despite a few statements that seem to be to the contrary. This is much more than just a philosopher's view. Many of the meditations presuppose it. This is especially true of the surprisingly large variety of meditations on Emptiness. This has not escaped the commentators' attention; however, they do not emphasize it much, preferring to leave Emptiness as that of consciousness rather than that of an illusory world. Mostly, they leave the practitioner to draw his own conclusions, but not entirely. When they do refer to the illusionism the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches, Ānandabhaṭṭa sees in this the influence of the Māyāvāda of Advaita Vedānta or at least regularly refers to what he perceives are analogous concepts including the absolute as the Brahman. Indeed, Ānandabhaṭṭa understands the teaching to be a license to integrate Advaita Vedānta here and there into his exposition. Śivopādhyāya does this also to some degree, but also regularly refers to Buddhism as another analogous source. His approach is exemplified by his commentary on *Vijñānabhairava* 135 (133). We shall see further ahead, that in fact, the Emptiness and the concomitant illusoriness of the world the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches is not inspired by Advaita Vedānta but probably by Buddhism. Let's not forget that the Void means a surprisingly many 'things' to surprisingly many people. The reference to emptiness in itself does not necessarily point to a Buddhist connection. The Tantric Vaiṣṇava Pāñcarātra talks about a shining energetic (*tejasvin*) Brahman without form (*niṣkala*) above Viṣṇu with form (*sakala*). Gauḍīya Vaiṣnavas

object to that view very much. The Buddhist influence is not marked by the teachings in the *Vijñānabhairava* concerning Emptiness. The characteristic hallmark of Buddhism is the denial of the Self and of some absolute, whether abstract or deity. Having clearly understood this, we may continue.

Like the commentators, Jayaratha understands that Abhinava is following in the tracks of the *Vijñānabhairava* and similar sources that maintain that the world is illusory. This is confusing. We have noted many times that it seems to be contrary to a fundamental tenet of non-dualist Śaivism. Generally, Abhinava maintains that appearance is a real manifestation. However, in some places, it seems that he does not do so. The teaching, for example, that the matrix of time, space and form is insubstantial as a reflection in a mirror is, as Abhinavagupta says, 'in order to develop the (awakened) consciousness (*bodha*) of those who lack intelligence.' (TĀ 3/21–22) Thus, he maintains the doctrine of 'supreme non-duality' remains intact, not by ultimately denying the reality of the world or even provisionally for the sake of instruction. It encompasses duality, duality-cum-non-duality and duality in the domains of the perceiver, perception and the perceiver; thus, allowing for divergences in texts like the *Vijñānabhairava* that proclaim themselves to be Trika.

There is no denying that Abhinavagupta apparently supports the doctrine of illusion in several places. The most notable, and well-known, is the *Paramārthasāra*. There, he says that the world is as illusory as mistaking a crystal placed near a red *java* flower to be itself red. An illusion is like a pimple on a boil—Māyā on top of Māyā. The *Paramārthasāra* is Abhinavagupta's Śaiva reworking of the non-dualist Vaiṣnava *Ādhārakārikā*. It is attributed to Ādiśeṣa, who is identified with Pātañjali, who wrote the *Yogasūtra*. As a Vaiṣṇava, he had no trouble declaring that the world is the illusion of Viṣṇu's Māyā. As it is an adaptation, one may argue that the text does not fully reflect the non-dualist Śaiva view, but there are other examples. The most prominent and extensive are some of the hymns attributed to Abhinavagupta. Their strongly illusionist position in places has led Sanderson to argue that they are not written by Abhinavagupta. But, as he himself admits, that is purely conjecture. The following verse from the *Anuttarāṣṭaka*, which is commonly attributed to Abhinavagupta, is quoted by Jayaratha (who does not expressly attribute it to him) and is undoubtedly illusionistic:

> 'In reality, there is no world of transmigration, (so) how can there be any question of embodied beings being bound? Acting (to achieve) liberation

(*muktikriyā*) on the part of one who is liberated and who is not bound is not in accord with reality (*vitathā*). This (cosmic) illusion (which is like) the rope (mistaken for a) snake and shade (mistaken for a) demon is a creation of false illusion. Abandon nothing! Take up nothing! Established in yourself just as you are, take rest!'[85]

Śivopādhyāya, in his commentary, dwells on a similar point at length, where he says:

> 'My (true) pure consciousness nature is neither bound nor liberated because it is not conditioned by space and time or the like. Bondage and liberation refer only to that which is limited (and conditioned). These thoughts of bondage and liberation are those of a frightened person who has not reflected on his own (true) nature because (he is under the) influence of the power of Māyā. (It is said in the Upaniṣads) that 'fear exists because there is (the notion that there is) a second (person apart from me)'.[86]

(Thus), one who reflects on the non-duality of consciousness (is not affected by) frightening things. (For him, they are not real, they are) like scarecrows that protect (the crops in) paddy fields by frightening away the sparrows (that eat the rice). What will thoughts such as—'one is bound by this', 'this should be done', 'liberation (is attained) only by (doing) this'—do to those who know reality? For Śuka teaches: 'travel playfully along the path free of the three qualities—what is prescribed and what is prohibited? (Nothing at all!)' And it is also said by the poet Kalhaṇa:

> 'The scarecrow in the rice field whose face is thin and burnt protects by instilling fear in the multitude of sparrows. (But) used to save (someone) in a forest, what could it do there (to protect him from) wild, ferocious elephants?'

> Just as (the apparent movement of) the solar orb (reflected) within water is reversed, so too (the objects of the senses in) the intellect. (Its) limited

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[85] Quoted in TĀv ad 1/332 (331) This is the second verse of *Anuttarāṣṭakastotra*—A Hymn in Eight Verses to Anuttara (the Absolute).

[86] Referring to Puruṣa—the individual soul—the BṛUp 1/4/2 says 'He was afraid; therefore, people are afraid to be alone. He thought 'if there is nothing else but me, what am I afraid of?' From that alone his fear was gone, for what was there to fear? It is from a second entity that fear comes.' Translation by Swāmī Mādhavānanda.

objects in the form of, for example, 'I am bound' (or) 'I am liberated' are reversed. Thus, one should abandon the (confused) intellect (*buddhi*) (that questions) 'what has happened to me?' This is because it is the intellect (*buddhi*) and the rest (of the psychophysical organism) and the like that make it manifest, (it has no other reality) and so too because (ultimate reality) is beyond it.'[87]

The *Vijñānabhairava* not only establishes that the world is illusory by examining the nature of objectivity—what we see—to the same end, it also examines the nature of perception—how we see. It tells us that we cannot ascertain the existence of an object of perception outside it. Thus, idealist Buddhists promote the doctrine that as an object and its perception are necessarily experienced together (*sahopalabdhiniyama-vāda*) and so are essentially the same. This, they say, is how we know things to be. This leads them to conclude that there is no outer world. Moreover, as there is no object, there can be no subject. There is only the perception of an outer world which, by its very nature, is deceptive not only with regards to its existence but also that of the perceiver. Similarly, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches the following meditation:

> '(All) knowledge is without (an outer, independent) cause, is baseless and deceptive. In reality, this (knowledge) does not belong to anybody. One who abides in this way (with this attitude), O dear one, is Śiva.'[88]

This meditation begins, as would a Buddhist one, by directing the meditator to the realisation that there is no Self. This is quite evident to the commentator Śivopādhyāya, who, unlike Āanandabhaṭṭa, notices the Buddhist connection on several occasions. Here, he articulates it as he introduces this mediation saying: 'Perception (*jñāna*) in itself (*eva*) is momentary and is an ongoing flow (*santāna*). There is no perceiver at all (of any kind) which is its foundation. Agreeing with (this) Buddhist view, he teaches an Empowered Means.' The reference here to this classification of practice is very significant. Śivopādhyāya is probably presenting the traditional view. The Empowered (*śākta*) Means is concerned with how we think about things. Śivopādhyāya implies that this meditation does not refer to the nature of things, although it clearly expresses itself as if it does.

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[87] Śivopādhyāya on *Vijñānabhairava* 135 (133).

[88] VBh 99 (98).

There is only 'knowledge', that is, cognitive consciousness. There is no knower who possesses it. However, this clearly Buddhist affirmation of 'no-Self' becomes Śaiva by identifying the individual who realises its true nature to be Śiva himself. There is a denial of Self and yet an affirmation of one's own identity as Śiva as the fulfilment of the realization of the truth of that negation. Another meditation, further ahead, which is totally Buddhist, drives home the same point. It begins by advancing an argument against the existence of an eternal absolute Self. It could not perceive or do anything that makes it subject to change in accord with the varied perceptions and actions. It goes on to declare, as before, that outer objects depend on perception to be known, rather than on a Self who, for the aforestated reason, cannot be a perceiver. The meditation concludes with the experience that the universe is 'empty', that is, devoid of substance as is an illusion. Thus, the *Vijñāna-bhairava* teaches:

> 'How can the unchanging Self possess knowledge or action? (And yet all) external entities depend on perception (*jñāna*) (in order to be known). (Clearly), therefore, this universe is Void (of any existence of its own).'[89]

I have translated '*jñāna*' as 'perception' here, although it literally means 'knowledge'. Generally, I translate it literally but that may not always be a satisfactory translation. The general meaning is 'noetic consciousness'. It illumines the world in the sense that it makes it known. Idealist Buddhists would prefer the term '*jñaptī*' or '*vijñaptī*'. Yogācāra Buddhists maintain that cognitive consciousness alone—*vijñaptimātratā*—is all that exists. This reality, known to be such, is not an object, nor a subject nor, indeed, the perception that takes place when the two interact. When it is not known, it appears as all three in various forms and to varying degrees. For these Buddhists, 'emptiness' means the ultimate state of cognitive consciousness devoid of the content generated by the dynamics of Karma, the existence of which depends on the 'existence' of the mistaken notion of Self in an individual locus of Self.

This verse is effectively saying that there is neither a subject nor an object of perception, all that exists is consciousness. The *Vijñānabhairava* is not always fully consistent. It need not be faulted for this because it is not a book that systematically expounds a philosophy. Nonetheless, it does have a fairly consistent view of reality, as it must, to guide all the meditations. Without it, they

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[89] *VBh* 134 (132).

would not work together towards the same goal, which is that same reality. Just a little further on, the Deity teaches the following meditation that realigns the *Vijñānabhairava* to the acceptance of the existence of the Self and so remains Śaiva. The verse is a difficult one. The teaching it transmits is subtle. It is probably for that reason that the verse is corrupt, as the existence of several variants of it testifies.[90] The following is the one in the printed edition:

> Knowledge (i.e. cognitive consciousness) illumines everything (in this world) and, as everything (is the object of illumination), the Self is the one who illumines. Knowledge alone, as its nature is one, is perceived to be the object of knowledge.[91] (137)

Ānandabhaṭṭa, who has a strong leaning towards Advaita Vedānta, concludes that:

> 'According to this teaching, nothing manifests or exists apart from the Light (of consciousness). In actual fact, the triad of knowledge, (its) object and the knower does not (ultimately) exist.'

This is not the view of the other commentators. The Light of consciousness illumines the objects that shine within it, but in doing so, it acts as the agent of illumination, that is, as the perceiver. Thus, it is both perception and the perceiver. As Śivopādhyāya puts it:

> 'By using the word 'knowledge' as an agent (noun), (it comes to mean) 'illuminator' which is the perceiving subject whose object of knowledge is such, that is, the object of illumination of the perceiver. This is the meaning. Having referred to objectivity, the existence of which is established (*sādhya*) by the perceiver, he refers to the subjectivity, the existence of which is established (*sādhya*) by the object, by saying 'by virtue of all (things) the Self is the illuminator'.'

In other words, the cognitive consciousness here called the 'light of knowledge', is both subject and object. This is a common view in the Tantras and tracts teaching idealist non-dualism, that became popular from the 9th cen-

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[90] The reader is directed to the translation where these variants are examined and the commentaries and notes to navigate the subtler points this meditation raises.

[91] *jñānaprakāśakaṃ sarvaṃ sarveṇātmā prakāśakaḥ |*
ekam ekasvabhāvatvāt jñānaṃ jñeyaṃ vibhāvyate || 137 ||

tury onwards, that is, during the period of the development of the non-dualist Śaiva exegesis. Kṣemarāja quotes the *Ucchuṣmabhairava*, which was a Tantra belonging to that period as saying:

> 'O beloved, if perceivers were not to exist, how could these objects of perception exist? The one reality is subject and object, thus, impurity does not exist.'[92]

This kind of idealist non-dualism spread to various schools in Kashmir of this period, even Vaiṣṇava. One example is the 10th-century *Saṃvitprakāśa* by the Vaiṣṇava Vāmana Datta. There we read: 'Knowledge itself has two natures in the form of the object of perception and the perceiver.'[93] We have observed, that in places the *Vijñānabhairava* supports the Buddhist view, that there is no Self, although it is quite out of line, indeed heretical of what we would nowadays call Hinduism and in the past could, amongst other things, be called '*ātmavāda*'—'the view that the Self exists'. In the following meditation, the yogi is taught how he is to free himself of the notion of Self. The seemingly existent Self is one that wills, has desires and intentions. Moreover, it knows, it is the 'knower'. So, without will or cognition of any sort, it ceases to exist, at least in the form in which it appears to be.

Of course, the *Vijñānabhairava* is not a Buddhist text–meditations support the existence of the Self even if that is sometimes at the expense of coherence. The yogi is directed to attend to his subjectivity when the will has not emerged and asserted itself, that is, when there is no impulse to action. It is this tranquil state, in which there is no sense of ego of the sort that 'I will, know or act', in which the yogi abides in his most authentic identity at one with his most essential conscious and blissful nature.

> '(Reflecting:) "when my will or knowledge have not arisen, who am I then?– Indeed, I am as I truly am!" being such (i.e. consciousness and bliss), merged in that, he becomes of that mind.'[94]

Swami Lakshmanjoo understands this meditation to be focused on the denial of the Self and explains accordingly: 'Although it seems that I am one

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[92] ŚSūvi ad 1/1.

[93] *vedyavedakarūpeṇa jñānam eva dvayātmakam* || *Saṁvitprakāśa* 2/126cd.

[94] VBh 97. The immediate, literal sense is that the practice is to let go of any personal sense of identity that is, without will or perception of Self. If the yogi achieves that he is as he truly is, that is, without Self and his mind is that of one who has no Self.

with these three—I have got desire, I have got knowledge, and I have got limited soul—but you must imagine that the limited soul is not existing, and its desire and its cognition are not existing. In fact, my formation of consciousness is like that.'

Śivopādhyāya saves the day by stressing that these are potencies of the Self. They may be operational or merged in the consciousness, their source and ground. Two of them—consciousness and bliss—operate in the introverted state, which is universal and the remaining three—will, knowledge and action—in the external individual state. Thus, he says:

> 'Knowledge (here secondarily) indicates action (also). If will, knowledge and action do not arise, I myself do not exist. Rather, what does exist is consciousness and bliss. This is the meaning. Consciousness, bliss, will, knowledge and action are, in actual fact, the powers of the Self in all states. But, on the contrary, this not so for one whose nature is, at that very same time, consciousness and bliss.'[95]

The Void, which is *Vijñānabhairava*'s goal and fundamental reality, is radically different from the Buddhists' Void. It is repeatedly identified with Deity who is the Supreme Lord (*parameśvara*), identified generically as Śiva and specifically, and more commonly, here as Bhairava. Moreover, at a few important junctures, the Deity is the Trika Goddess Parā. The *Vijñānabhairava* is not simply playing lip service to the Deity. It teaches meditations centred on it, underscoring its absolute nature and divinity. The yogi is admonished to constantly repeat Bhairava's name, as is common devotional practice–*bhakti*. He is to recollect the etymology of Bhairava's name to enhance his attention to him. He is to contemplate the Deities' divine attributes, like omnipresence and omniformity. All this he does to ultimately realise that Bhairava is his true nature. Repeatedly, the experience of the Void is presented as the realisation of this identity.

An apparent similarity between this Void and that of Mahāyāna Buddhism, especially the school of Mahāmudrā, taught by the Buddhist Siddhas who identify the polarities as 'Emptiness' and 'Skilful Means'. 'Emptiness'—*śūnyatā*—is feminine. It is identified with the Goddess Prajñāparamitā–Unexcelled Wisdom, as insight into the true nature of things as the Void of pure consciousness. The male component is skilful means (*upāya*), which is identi-

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[95] VBh U ad 97.

fied with compassion (*karuṇa*) and comprises all the ways and means applied to achieve enlightenment. The oneness of the two is Mahāmudrā.

Here, in the great majority of cases, the Deity who is revealed or becomes present by the contemplation of Emptiness is the male Bhairava or his 'body' which is divine consciousness. He is only occasionally referred to as Śiva. Moreover, in several instances, it is the Goddess Parā who is revealed at the summit of merger, where the mind dissolves away.

> 'Having meditated on the merger of the subtle and (then progressively) most subtle principles (back into one another) that are within one's own body or also of the universe, in the end (the Goddess) Parā is revealed.'[96]

Parā is also realized in the state free of the mind and its activity between waking and sleep:

> 'The state that manifests, which should be grasped by the (attentive) mind when, (as one falls asleep), the external field (of awareness) has disappeared (but) sleep has not yet come, is the Goddess Parā.'[97]

Śivopadhyāya comments that 'that same (state) manifests as the Supreme Goddess. She is also (called) Śāmbhavī.' The transcendent Goddess is Bhairava's state. She is the supreme state. As such, She is, in a way, higher than Bhairava because she is the state by virtue of which he is Bhairava.[98] The Goddess is above all Bhairava's power (*śakti*). As such, She is one with him as are heat and fire. She is one with Bhairava, the Supreme Self (18), that is, the deepest fundamental identity of all things. Much more important than her ontological nature is her soteriological activity. She is the power of consciousness that, grounded in the Void of ultimate reality, is free of all support and reveals one's own nature (92cd) within and as the Void. It is by means of Śakti, that is, the Deity's power, that the fettered soul becomes Śiva. She illumines him. It is by means of her that he is known like space illumined by light (21).

Parā, at the most concretely accessible level, is the deepest reality of the flow of the vital breath resonant with the Unstruck Sound of Haṁsa. It is in this context that she appears the most. As Śivopādhyāya writes:

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[96] *VBh* 54.

[97] *Ibid.* 75 (74).

[98] *This state of Bhairava, which is praised (in the Tantras), is the supreme state, which is known as the highest Goddess in transcendent form* (VBh 17).

'In this realm of supreme (transcendence) and its (immanent) counterpart (*parāparabhūmi*), the bliss which is the pulsing union of the phonemes SA and HA is 'Great Bliss'. He who 'following along and abiding' in the sacrifice made of that (bliss), its nature the reflective awareness that "I am he" (SO'HAM), is one with that Speech of Vision and, being so, is Parā by nature.'[99]

This identification of the flow of the breath with the dynamism of reflective cognitive awareness (*vimarśa*) of the Void of consciousness is totally unknown to the *Vijñānabhairava*, although it can be said to be implicitly represented by the presence of Parā as Śivopādhyāya suggests. Here is one of many examples of how the Pratyabhijñā, where this concept is elaborated, serves as an exegetical tool. As Śivopādhyāya puts it:

'This Goddess Parā is 'uttering forth' (these two breaths), that is, she abides always uttering Herself forth (spontaneously) (as the two breaths). How is 'emission'? It is Her (very) nature, which is reflective awareness (*vimarśa*), the instrumental cause of the relationship between inner and outer.'[100]

From another point of view, one can say that Parā is realized at the summit of increasingly subtle reality levels and that these correspond to increasingly intense degrees of devotion which develop into insight. Ultimately,

'The kind of intuitive insight (*mati*) that arises of one who is detached (from the world) by virtue of (his) intense devotion (*bhaktyudrekād*), is Śaṅkara's power. Contemplate her constantly, (and) thus, (become) Śiva.'[101]

Śakti is extolled both at the beginning as well as at the end of the narrative that frames the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava* to underscore the central role she plays in the practice of all the meditations. Thus, in the beginning, Bhairava declares that:

'One who has entered the state of Energy by means of the meditation that (he is) undivided (from it) then becomes Śiva. (Śakti) is called the face (mouth or entrance into) Śiva here (in this world).'[102]

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[99] Śivopādhyāya on VBh 155–156 (153–155).

[100] *Uddyota* ad v. 24.

[101] VBh 121 (119).

[102] VBh 20.

In the concluding narrative, the goddess exclaims: That she has understood 'the heart of all the many various energies.' (162cd) This declaration implies that each one of the meditations enshrines one or more Śaktis. Each and every one of them possesses the power to experience the ultimate liberating vision. One meditation expressly states that it is by virtue of the Goddess of the Void that the Void is realised.

Indeed, the introduction to the meditations extolls the presence and power of the goddess as essential for the yogi to attain liberation by any means, especially, the meditations Bhairava is about to teach. The thrust of the argument may not be clear for those who are not acquainted with the technicalities of Mantra and basic presuppositions that explain the efficacy of ritual. Ritual meant here is the worship of a Deity. Deity has two aspects. One is differentiated (*sakala*) and is in the form in which it is visualized or represented iconically. The other aspect of the Deity is undifferentiated (*niṣkala*) and formless. The former can be an object of worship, whereas the latter cannot. The most subtle and divine form Deity can assume is Mantra. Amongst the 70 billion Mantras, the ones that are considered to be the most powerful are, of course, those of one's own school. These, the goddess enumerates first of all. The most important of these Trika Mantras are the three-in-one Mantras of the three-in-one goddess of the Trika, that is, Parā, Parāparā and Aparā. The reason that they lead to liberation is because their energies are distributed in an ascending series starting with three levels of audible sound and then up through the resonance of nine more levels. But although they are progressively more subtle, these too are part of the Deity's differentiated form.

Bhairava stresses that the highest and ultimate form is the undifferentiated (*niṣkala*) one. This is Parā. She is not made of parts–so how can she be worshipped and be embodied even in the subtle form of Mantra? And yet, without her, no worship is possible, no Mantra is effective and no meditation can attain its goal. She is essential. Devoid of its formless, undifferentiated aspect, Deity would not be Deity. Free of all diversity of space and time, Parā (17) is the very state of the Bhairava, the Deity of the *Vijñānabhairava*. She is his Godhead, without Parā, Bhairava would not be Bhairava. Just as fire would not be fire without heat and the sky without space. Free of all conception, she is the plenitude and perfection of the God. The Goddess Parā is the focus of the introduction to the *Vijñānabhairava*. This is because by the profound contemplation (*bhāvanā*) of her nature, the yogi realises his oneness with the Void which is Bhairava's body. She is the door or 'mouth' through which to enter to achieve liberation (VBh 20).

But while the Goddess's power, pervades and is one with the Void of Śiva consciousness as His very nature, and so is liberating, surprisingly, no creative power is attributed to it. It would be easy to have a real creation emanating from Emptiness through that same power as Abhinava would have it in his exegesis. One could cite many examples. Here is one:

> 'The independence (*ananyāpekṣitā*) of the Lord with respect to His being all things is that supreme creative intuition (*pratibhā*) (our teachers) call the Goddess, who is (the feminine) Absolute (*anuttarā*).'[103]

The pantheism, the Trika exegete preaches from many perspectives, is grounded in the power which is the freedom—*svātantrya*—of the One to be all things without that compromising its unity. As the texts put it, it is the power it has to do what logic would consider to be impossible (*atidurgaṭa-kāritva*). The same power is its creative genius by which it fashions the universe and the stream of energies represented by the letters beginning with A, of which this verse is a description. All this and more is packed into the concept of Śakti by the Trika non-dualist Śaivites. But although the *Vijñāna-bhairava* stresses the fundamental importance of Śakti to realise oneness with the infinite expanse of the consciousness that is Deity and the Self, it nowhere attributes any cosmogonic function to it. But while it appears that the Goddess is short-changed in this way, her presence distances the Void that is Bhairava's Body from the Buddhist one.

Here too, as elsewhere, Śivopādhyāya perceives an analogy with Buddhism. He observes that the Parā is like the Buddhist Prajñāparamitā. This is a particularly apt comparison because the Buddhist goddess also admits to the experience of Emptiness. Thus, he writes: 'free of obscuring coverings, (Parā) is said to be (the Buddhist goddess) Prajñāpāramitā. That is said (by the Buddhists themselves):

> 'Free of thought constructs, unmanifest, devoid of thought constructs, disease and 'own nature', she is supreme (*parā*), subtle, and devoid of Sound (*nāda*) and the Point (*bindu*), She is otherwise (called) Prajñāpāramitā, the supreme (goddess) Parā who is the dawning of all the Buddhas.'[104]

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[103] TĀ 3/65cd-66ab (66).

[104] I could not trace this reference.

This citation can be understood, as Śivopādhyāya would like it to be, that the Buddhist goddess Prajñāpāramitā is the same as the Trika goddess Parā. He makes this equation right at the beginning of his commentary and stresses it again here, towards the end. But while the two goddesses have much in common, there is a major difference: Parā is Śakti and as such is cosmogonic, indeed, the very essence of emission (*visarga*). (24)

Śivopādhyāya's references to Buddhism suggest some kind of hangover from the past. Buddhism was a powerful and historically very important presence in Kashmir up to the coming of the Muslims, who practically obliterated it. By Śivopādhyāya's time, although long gone, they still had some influence on some Śaivites. Thus, Śivopādhyāya refers to the author of the *Tattvamañjarī* as a Śaivite who 'delights in the joy of Buddhist teachings.' He quotes him as writing: 'There is fear of something if I (were to be) something. Thus, if I myself am nothing, then whose fear arises?'

He goes on to quote 'the Buddhists' as saying: 'If there is a Self, the denotation (of another person as someone) else (is possible). (This is) when there is a division between, 'self' and 'other', attachment and aversion. All defects arise bound to these two.'

Clearly, the realization of Emptiness taught in the *Vijñānabhairava* differs from the Buddhist one. While the cardinal feature of the Buddhists' Void is the realisation that there is no Self. The *Vijñānabhairava* promises that by the realization of Emptiness, the yogi will be liberated by realizing his identity with Śiva/Bhairava. This realisation removes the false, conceived (*kalpita*), corporeal and mental notion of the ego that arrogates the activity and perceptions of the body to itself as their agent. That notion of oneself, with its history, memories, hopes and fears, is removed in that Emptiness, as it is for the Buddhist aspirant. But unlike the latter, it is replaced by another higher identity which is that of the Deity itself.

However, on one fundamental point, the *Vijñānabhairava* does agree with Mahāyāna Buddhists. The world, it maintains, is an illusion or, as it puts it, a conjuring trick (*indrajāla*). It is deluding (*vimohinī*) Māyā (95). We would not expect the *Vijñānabhairava* to have the strongly illusionist view of the world that it does. Indeed, many who have explained the meditations have tended to shy away from taking this view seriously and literally as it is. Nonetheless, it is of central importance to the *Vijñānabhairava*'s view of reality. This view, declared in the opening, introductory verses and repeated again in the concluding ones, is thus underlined by this encapsulation. In this way, the teach-

ing is both emphasized and, as in other cases, implicitly declared to pervade all the meditations it encapsulates.

The yogi is invited to contemplate the entire universe as Empty. In other words, the yogi should constantly reflect that it appears to exist but actually does not. It is the Void of illusion. This practice is reinforced by meditating on non-existence and the absence of Bhairava. At the microcosmic level, the yogi is instructed to be aware of the Void within the body, in its constituent parts, and in the head. This Void is identified with consciousness–the residue that remains when all the false projections onto it have been removed by knowing that they are illusory. To reinforce this realisation, the yogi is directed to do the same in the bodies of others. To see, in other words, that people are actually pure divine, disembodied consciousness.[105] In this way, they dissolve into the Universal Void of consciousness. Thus, the Void of illusion in the world and the body gives way to the Void of ultimate reality in universal consciousness.

Sometimes, in order to distinguish the Void of Bhairava consciousness from the Void of illusion, it is called the Supreme Void which is Bhairava's body and so too one's own higher body.[106] Bhairava's body is mentioned several times. It is also called the Void beyond the Void of Māyā (*śūnyātiśūnya*) which comprises the directions around the body, and those of the senses, sensations, their objects and more. In such instances also, the Void of illusion turns to that of consciousness. Thus, for example, by meditating on the Void around the body, everything becomes the Void (v. 43).[107]

Meditation and Realization in the *Vijñānabhairava*

While it is essential to understand what the *Vijñānabhairava* considers to be ultimate reality and the states of reality we experience, it does not, and need not, enter into discussion about that. Even so, we can understand the ontology of the *Vijñānabhairava* by examining its praxis. What the *Vijñānabhairava* has to say about reality is incidental to the teaching it imparts concerning medita-

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[105] See VBh 100 (99).

[106] See VBh v 41.

[107] Editor's note: In the initial manuscript, Mark included a brief section outlining the history of Buddhist meditation. Upon further discussion, he agreed that this material did not properly belong in the introduction, and it has therefore been omitted.

tion. At every turn, it deals with experience and in doing so, more or less implicitly it tells us the nature of the reality the meditation aims to realize.

Accordingly, the *Vijñānabhairava* refers to the attainment of the supreme goal (34), as the supreme realization (62), awakening (29, 57, 63) in many wonderful ways. It is the dawning of Bhairava's state (28), the realisation of Śiva (30), the manifestation of God (35), the Supreme Brahman (38), and supreme permanence (*sthiti*) (36). Its outpouring is everywhere (31). At the same time, it is absorption (*laya*) (37), entry into the Heart of the Absolute Void (32), the state, attainment, form, and firm contemplation of the Supreme Void and merger into it (39, 40, 41, 44, 47, 58, 59). It is becoming Śiva and experiencing everything as Void (43). It is the dissolving away of the mind (*manolaya*) (56) and thought (60) and the dawning of consciousness free of thought (*nirvikalpodaya*) (45, 46). It is the attainment of the one who cannot be contemplated (*adhyeyabhāk*) (48), the supreme good fortune (*saubhāgya*) (49), the revelation of reality (*tattva*) (50, 61, 66), the tranquil Light (*śāntā-bhāsa*) (52) and the Supreme Goddess (54).

The result is often in consonance with the practice. For example, spiritual bliss and merger of the mind into consciousness may take place through intensely pleasing experiences by reflecting on their essential nature as manifestations of the inherent bliss of ultimate reality. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches: 'fix the mind wherever the mind finds satisfaction. It is there itself that the essential nature of supreme bliss arises.' (74) Worldly people do not realize that. Yogis and devotees perceive that the things that 'bring satisfaction' do so because they are essentially pure and sacred. Thus, Abhinavagupta, in the same spirit, teaches that these are the best offerings to the Deity.[108]

The foundation of such practices is the experience that the one blissful reality, which is Deity, is everywhere, pervading the world as it does the body. Experiencing that, the yogi becomes supreme bliss (65) and experiences it (67) in union with the bliss of passion (*smarānanda*) (68) and the spiritual bliss of making love (69,70) or when seeing old friends (71) or eating and drinking (72) and enjoying music and the like (73). By that bliss, the mind dissolves away (71), the Goddess manifests (75), as does one's own essential nature (76), and its supreme pervasion (77). The illumined mind (*mati*) attains supreme plenitude (78), peace (*śama*) (79), and dissolves into tranquility (*śānta*) (81). The yogi thus attains freedom from negative mental dispositions

[108] TĀ 4/120–1

(*kṣīṇāśaya*) (82), enters the stream of the divine current of the flood of consciousness (*divyaugha*) (83) and becomes Śiva (80).

The meditations (*dhāraṇa, yukti*) the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches, which cover the entire domain of our being and experience, ranging from the body to the plenitude and perfection of the Emptiness of pure God consciousness. They cover all reality levels in ascent vertically, as it were, they also range over all of human experience and action, horizontally. Abhinavagupta quotes the *Triśirobhairava*, an important Trika Kula Tantra, as stating as much:

> 'This delight (*rāma*) is movement, standing (still), dreaming (the dream of thought constructs) and waking (to the insight of knowledge). (It is) the opening and closing of the eyes, running, jumping, exerting an effort (in knowledge and ignorance) (*āyāsa*), the experience of the energies (of the senses), the (various) forms of the intellect (*buddhi*), entities, names and countless actions.[109] It is Śiva, the supreme (omnipresent) cause, who pervades (everything) here.'[110]

The meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava* are meant to lead the practitioner to a direct experience of higher states, indeed, the ultimate one, which is one of complete and perfect fulfilment (*pūrṇatā*). Accordingly, it declares in one of its concluding verses:

> 'The state which is (Bhairava's) form filled (with all things) (*bharita*) that arises day after day when one abides here in any one of (these) practices (*yukti*), is that (spiritual) satisfaction (experienced) here which is perfect plentitude.'[111]

The liberated state is complete and perfect in all respects. Nothing is missing. Such is Bhairava, whose very name is said to be derived in part from the word *bharaṇa* in the sense of 'filling', i.e. fulfilling. He is the all-pervading Lord who fills, completes, and perfects all things by dissolving them within con-

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[109] Rāma is the blissful, playful Lord who delights in creating the universe. As Jayaratha explains, Rāma is the name given to 'the Supreme Lord, who is the Supreme Self, intent on the play of making the entire universe manifest'. All these varieties of actions and the rest listed here are collectively emblematic of all that takes place because Rāma pervades them all. Thus, Rāma is Śiva, the real cause of the universe.

[110] TĀ 1/86–87 (87–88).

[111] VBh 148 (146).

sciousness, where the omnipresent God is revealed through the channels of the senses. These are the tiny outlets through which the emptiness of infinite consciousness pours forth submerging all that is perceived through them into pure consciousness. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches:

> Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of the senses, (their object) dissolves away within consciousness and so, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude (as all things manifests as the yogi's true nature).[112]

In other words, anything can potentially serve as a means to attaining higher states of consciousness. Accordingly, the *Vijñānabhairava* carefully analyses the range of common daily and yogic experiences, making use of them as meditations that culminate in the realization of the ultimate reality, which is at once Deity, Oneness, Consciousness and Emptiness. The main domains of practice can be classified as follows.

> **The Body:** (52, 53, 54, 63, 65, 93, 111), Emptiness within the gross body (34, 44, 48, 49, 55), the subtle body and its parts (35), the centres of the subtle body (30, 37,49, 51), and Kuṇḍalinī (28, 29).

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[112] *yatra yatrākṣamārgeṇa caitanyaṃ vyajyate vibhoḥ |*
tasya tanmātradharmitvāc cillayād bharitātmatā ||

Just to exemplify that many correct translations of the same verse are possible, here are another three translations of this verse by Dyczkowski:

'Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of any one of the senses, it dissolves away within consciousness because it possesses just that same nature and so (the yogi becomes Bhairava, who is) the state of (perfect) plenitude.'

'Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of the senses, (their object) dissolves away within consciousness, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, and so (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude, (as all things, manifests as the yogi's true nature).'

'In whichever thing the consciousness of the universal Being is manifested through the senses, consciousness alone is the ground of that appearance. Realizing this, one is dissolved into consciousness (which is the ground of the universe) and thus, experiences the entire fullness of being, i.e., the full aspect of Bhairava is there within him.' VBh 117 (115)

The Breath: The places of its origin and end (24, 25, 64), its movement and form (26, 27, 31, 55), and upward rise (67).

Emptiness: In relation to the body (43, 44, 45, 46), outer emptiness (33, 59, 60, 76, 84, 85, 87, 128), Emptiness of the mind (94, 122) even when objects are perceived, Emptiness at the end of sound (40) and the Sky of the Self (92).

Consciousness is without cause (99) and present in all bodies (100, 107), it is everywhere and in everything (104, 105). It is revealed through the senses (117).

Perception: The existence of objects depends on perception (134), knowledge and the known are one (137). Perception operates through the activity of the senses (32, 33) and it is the place of origin of will, knowledge and action (96, 98)

No mind: 108, 112, 116.

Mudrās: 77.

Mantra: The utterance of syllabic Mantras (39, 40, 42, 90, 91).

Sound, inner and outer: 38, 41, 114.

Physical practice: 36, 37, tickling (66) and sitting (78, 79, 82, 83).

Concentration on an object and place: 80, 81, 115, 119, 120, eyes wide open (113).

Detachment: Through devotion (121) and withdrawal of the mind (129, 131, 136).

Oneness and transcendence of the opposites of purity and impurity (123), friend and foe (125, 126), bondage and liberation (135).

Centreing: 59, 61, 62, 68, 70, between waking and sleep (75), between attachment and aversion, suffering and joy (103).

Spiritual joy and aesthetic delight: 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74.

Intense Emotions: 101, 118.

Contemplating the universe: 33, 34, 35, 62, 63, 65, as a magic show (78, 133).

Identity with Śiva: 109, 110, Bhairava is present in everybody (124) and everywhere (132) as Emptiness (127); the utterance of Bhairava's name (130).

One would not expect a treatise on meditation to advance a theory of beauty. It is implicit in meditations on intense emotive states experienced in the course of love-making and the enjoyment of beautiful objects, pleasant as well as intensely disturbing sensations. Such meditations are found in numerous short tracts redacted in the course of the Kashmiri Trika exegesis, beginning with the *Śivasūtra*s and the *Spandakārikā*. They are emblematic of Kaula practice and its precedents, as is the *Vijñānabhairava*. In the early period of the Bhairava Tantras, meditations or 'visualizations' (*dhyāna*) are quite common. The selections of extensive, sophisticated meditations that Abhinava presents from these early Tantras, such as the *Triśirobhairava*, the *Sarvavīra*, and *Kulagahvara*, testify to the richness of this genre of practice.

They may be performed independently or in association with a rite. The two, ritual and meditation, are thus closely related and are equally, in their respective domains of ritual action. Thus, although the *Vijñānabhairava* has no place for the performance of rites, it presents in a series of meditations the underlying principles on which they are based as meditations. This approach is applied to the sexual act which is understood in the same terms as the joy of the experience of beauty. It is not perceived by the senses, as one does a physical object. The object is beautiful, but its beauty is not perceived as the object is perceived. The experience of beauty is not a common, mundane experience. It takes place when the barriers that obscure the experience of the bliss of the unconditioned Brahman are removed for some time.

This belief goes far back. Its classic formulation is found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*, one of the oldest Upaniṣads that belongs to the 4th century BCE, if not earlier. There, the well-known statement appears that 'the Brahman is indeed bliss' (*ānando vai brahmā*). It is clear from the context that by 'bliss' is meant the pleasure experienced during sexual intercourse, especially during orgasm. It has been well established that the term *ānanda*, not found in early Vedic, has this specific sense. This view (but not the term) has deep roots in the earlier Brahmaṇas and even the Vedas themselves.[113] This fundamental belief is the foundation of the generally accepted aesthetics in India. It is simply that the delight of the experience of beauty and so, by extension, of sex, is not a physical pleasure of the senses. Rather, it is the emergence or disclosure for a while

[113] The reader is referred to *The Unknown Kāmasūtra* in which V. S. Agrawal has collected, in the form of an anthology, numerous such cognate passages found in these texts. Sadly, he does not supply exact references to their locations in his sources.

of the experience of the Brahman itself that takes place by the removal of the impediments that otherwise submerge and hide it from view.

The *Vijñānabhairava* dedicates as many as seven meditations (VBh 68 to 74) to the experience of an outpouring (*ullāsa*) of the blissful expansion of consciousness. In the context of spiritual practice, Kṣemarāja refers to it as '*sukhopāya*'—'the blissful or easy means'. Although the practice and the experience that accompanies it appears many times in the *Tantrāloka*, the term itself does so only once. Kṣemarāja, however, makes ample use of the term in key places in his expositions to underscore that this is the most elevated practice, as he understands it, of the Krama and Trika teachings. It is the core of what he calls the 'Heart of Recognition' that we would nowadays refer to as 'Kashmir Śaivism.'

While spiritual practice in the course of sexual union is relatively rare, it is considered to be the most excellent practice by Abhinavagupta and the Trika-cum-Krama tradition he followed. Called *Ādiyāga*—the Foremost Sacrifice, Abhinava lists as many as eleven Tantras that testify that it is the most excellent form of all ritual worship. Chapter twenty-nine of his *Tantrāloka* teaches this as Kaula ritual (*kulaprakriyā*), drawing the core practice from the proto-Krama of the *Mādhavakula*, which is the fourth *ṣaṭka* of the *Jayadrathayāmala*. No such ritual is even hinted at in the *Vijñānabhairava*, nor would we expect it to be. The rites of the *Ādiyāga*, as elaborated at great depth by Abhinavagupta's presentation and exegesis, involve extensive visualization and other cognitive yogic practice, although it is, nonetheless, an outer ritual.

The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that art, especially music, is a means to heighten consciousness. Mantras and music are higher forms of language. Above the sphere of mind and its language of thought, they communicate and fashion the universal forms within universal consciousness that inspire and give meaning to those below in the sphere of consciousness, where communication is worship, and the worshipper offers himself to the Divine, his own true nature. Here, the mind of the Yogi, one with Mantra and music, freed from the constraints of thought, merges into the expanse of consciousness. As the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches:

> The yogi who (experiences) the oneness of the unparalleled joy of savoring singing and other such (beautiful) objects (of sense, his) mind fixed (and well concentrated on that) becomes of that same (blissful) nature (as the Brahman) by identifying with it (*tanmayatvena*).[114]

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[114] VBh 73 (72).

Abhinava cites these meditations as prime authorities in his exposition of the experience of non-discursive consciousness in the course of aesthetic and erotic rapture and in other highly emotive states, including intense suffering. These meditations made a significant contribution to the budding non-dualist Śaiva exegesis that emerged in the middle of the ninth century in Kashmir.[115] Abhinavagupta presents an extensive mysticism of orgasm which he has occasion to present effectively as a commentary on these verses centred on the experience of the exuberant outpouring (*ullāsa*), expansion (*vikāsa*) and emission (*visarga*) of consciousness brought about by the arousal (*kṣobha*) of its vitality (*vīrya*). Although, none of these terms are found in the *Vijñānabhaiarava*, they are the pillars of Abhinavagupta's exegesis. The passage in the *vivaraṇa* is quite lengthy, but well worth quoting:

> Śiva, who is the emission of the vitality of the Great Mantra (*ahaṃ*) which is Supreme Speech, unites with the emanation emitted by the Supreme Goddess, who is full to overflowing with the issue (to which she gives birth) which is the condensed form of the vitality (*virya*) (of the seed of Śiva consciousness). All that enters in the same way, through the external and internal (mental) senses, onto the plane of the central channel (of the vital breath), which is essentially the vitality that gives life to all the limbs of the body, in the form of sentient awareness (*cetanā*) and the vital breath (*prāṇa*), is called 'vigour' (*ojas*). It (is present) in all the limbs (of the body) as that which gives them life in the form of the vitality (of consciousness) which is undivided from that (influx of the senses). Then, entering again through the channels of sight and hearing etc, the form and sound etc, which intensifies (consciousness) (*bṛṃhaka*) because it is their nature to intensify it, they awaken the Fire of Desire (*kāmānala*), which is (essentially) the arousal of this vitality (*vīryakṣobha*). As is said (this takes place): 'by the (sweet) talk (between lovers) (*ālāp*) or by touching the limbs (of the body)' and so on.
>
> For one (whose consciousness) is intensified by the (inner) force (*bala*) (of the Self) which precedes (perception) that has developed by (the perception of the beauty of any) one thing amongst others, such as a (beautiful) colour, is capable of serving as an instrumental means to bring about the aforementioned arousal (of vitality) which can be applied to all the objects

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[115] For example, compare SpKā 22 with *Vijñānabhairava* 71 (70).

(of the senses) because everything is of the nature of all things. (Moreover,) the same arousal takes place by recollection, imagination or the like because it is nourished by the infinite number of (meaningful) words (*śabda*) etc, that reside (as a potential) in the mind (*manas*), which consists of all things. Only (that) great vitality, consisting of all things and fully developed, nourishes and creates, not one that is undeveloped (*apūrṇa*) and decayed like that of children and the aged (respectively).

When (that) arousal of vitality takes place, the source of joy (*sukha*) is the freedom consisting of the power of bliss, which is completely full Bhairava consciousness and is the great emission (*mahāvisarga*) consisting of the pulsation (*spanda*) (of consciousness) unmeasured by time or space of (that same) vitality which, because it consists of its own (conscious) nature, is (one and) undivided. (Thus) also (in the same way a beautiful) form (*rūpa*) (beheld) through the eyes brings joy (to them) by means of the release (*viśleṣa*) of the great emission, which is the arousal of that vitality (*vīryakṣobha*). (The same applies) to a sweet (melodious) song etc, (heard) through the sense of hearing. (However,) in the case of the other senses, (all) else (that enters) within them effervesces only in itself, and so does not attain a completely full state of the emanation (of bliss).

The same is the case with those who are not nourished by that vitality, that is, who, like stones, are devoid of the bliss of passion (*madanānanda*), which is this kind of arousal of vitality. (For them) neither the form of the most beautiful young woman nor the most tender and melodious song that comes from the mouth of (an innocent young) woman, results in the fullness of bliss. To the degree in which this vitality does not nourish (consciousness), the wonder (of the experience of beauty) decreases. A total absence of wonder is insentience itself. (Conversely,) aesthetic sensitivity (*sahṛdayatā*), is (a state of) penetration into a heightened (state of) wonder, which is the arousal of the vitality (of consciousness). Only he, whose heart is nourished by this endless nourishing vitality and is dedicated to the practice of attachment to this (form of) enjoyment (by contemplating fine art or spiritual practice), possesses the dynamism of the most excellent (unfolding act of) wonder (which is the capacity to relish beauty in this way). (Moreover, this kind of person experiences) this same wonder even when suffering. The nature of suffering is, essentially, a particular kind of wonder (*camatkṛiyā*), brought about by the absence of all hope that arises when the inner joy,

which is the vitality and expansion (of consciousness), consisting of the arousal (of love) a son gives or a lover, or (the shock of a fond) memory, or the sight of something similar, or a cry (for help) and the like (when one thinks that the son or lover has gone and all that has ceased and) will never exist again. That was said (by Somānanda with the words): 'by the expansion (of Śiva consciousness) even in the midst of suffering.'[116]

Three Types of Yoga in the *Vijñānabhairava*

There are many ways that Yogas can be classified, depending on what Yoga is considered to be. Each of the eighteen chapters of the *Bhagavadgītā* is called a 'yoga'. Kṛṣṇa teaches Arjuna the practice of sitting in meditation, concentrating on the space between the eyebrows, whilst recollecting Lord Kṛṣṇa. This is called Rāja Yoga. There is a chapter called Sāṁkhya Yoga. But, otherwise, Kṛṣṇa applies the term to practically every aspect of the practice he teaches. Thus, the first chapter is called the Yoga of despondency, others are called the Yogas of dispassion, discrimination, knowledge, action, devotion and so on.

Clearly, in the *Gītā*, the word 'yoga' denotes spiritual practice in general. In the context of the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava* and more generally, we can largely distinguish the following three basic categories as a simple aid to our understanding of what the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches.

Bodily Yogas

These Yogas involve the use of the body as an instrument of meditation. We can subdivide them as follows.

a) Postural Yoga: Amongst the most common forms of Yoga we see nowadays, is postural Yoga. This was hardly practiced prior to the thirteenth century when the Haṭhayoga system attributed to Gorakṣanātha came into prominence. Nor did it come into its own for two or three centuries later. We notice what we may consider to be a crude precursor to it in a group of meditations (VBh 78–79 (77–78), 82, 83) in which the yogi is enjoined to swing back and forth sitting on one side of his buttock, or feel the sway of a vehicle the yogi happens to be sitting in and the like.

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[116] *PTv p. 45–49. The translation is mine.*

b) Cosmic Projections onto the Body: There are several examples that we have already discussed of the projection of the worlds and reality levels onto the body.
c) The body as a vessel of consciousness: There are several meditations that treat the body as a vessel of the Void of consciousness and the presence of the Self and Deity in that form within it.
d) Meditations based on the Subtle Body. These involve perceiving locations in the subtle body that serve as stations of the ascent of the vital breath from the base of the spine to the apex of the subtle body in the End of the Twelve, where Beyond Mind is located. Moving along that path, the breath, and with it the individual soul, merges into the plenitude of the Void of Consciousness. The *Vijñānabhairava* provides several such meditations. In one, there are twelve such stations of ascent arranged in a string of lights. Others talk of spinning vortexes (*cakra*) of energies, the upward movement of Kuṇḍalinī, like a sudden lightning flash (VBh 29) or just flowing upwards with the current of the inner breath.

Yogas of the Vital Breath

Yogas of the vital breath, or one could simply call them prāṇic Yogas, are naturally closely related to corporeal yogas. Sometimes it is difficult to decide which of these two categories a practice belongs to. As a sign of the importance the *Vijñānabhairava* attributes to these yogas, they are taught first at the beginning of the meditations. The most important amongst them is the first. Are we to understand by this that that is the most fundamental meditation of all those taught in the *Vijñānabhairava*? Certainly, many people belonging to diverse traditions—including Vaiṣṇava and Sikh—assume this to be their practice. This is the observation of the flow of the breath as it moves upwards in the course of exhalation (*prāṇa*) from the Heart to the End of the Twelve and then back down in the course of inhalation. Here, the yogi is instructed that the two breaths are the emission of the Supreme Goddess, that is, how she manifests and so to be attentive to the two places where the two breaths originate. He should observe how they are filled—the heart by the descending breath and the End of the Twelve by the ascending breath. This meditation however, misses a direct reference to the fundamental practice of listening to the sound of the breathing. This is taught and commented extensively in the last meditation of the *Vijñānabhairava*. In this way, the one meditation in its two forms 'encapsulates' all the other meditations.

Thus, although not mentioned in the initial verse of the *Vijñānabhairava*, the practice, as Swami Lakshmanjoo explains, is essentially attending to the resonant energy of the breath as it utters the inner Mantra of the breath that resonates within it as the Supreme Goddess and energy of Śiva consciousness. Swami Lakshmanjoo explains (2002: 21): 'You have to take the breath from the Heart to the End of the Twelve and take it from the End of the Twelve to the Heart again and recite *prāṇa* [the exhaled breath] and *jīva* [the inhaled breath]. To recite *prāṇa* means to recite 'SA' in the outward End of the Twelve and the sound 'AṂ' of HAṂSAḤ will be recited in the heart. When you take your breath inside, it will end with 'AṂ', when you take it out, it will end in *visarga* [emission] 'SAḤ' and if you concentrate on these two starting points, you will become one with Bhairava because of His fullness.'

This very important aspect of the practice of attending to the flow of the breath is discussed at length by Śivopādhyāya in his commentary on the last of the series of meditations.[117] It should be read and practiced together with the first meditation of the series (verse 24). It is clear that by positioning them in this way, this practice is very important for the *Vijñānabhairava*.

Indeed, none would dispute that observing the movement of the breath and listening to its sound is one of the most important yogic practices in India. Indeed, if we also take into consideration the common injunction to watch the breath in the course of reciting Mantra, it certainly makes it the most common yogic practice. It is not surprising that the *Vijñānabhairava* begins with a cluster of such meditations, the first of which is so important that it is replicated at the conclusion of the *Vijñānabhairava*, where it is taught in a cluster of three verses. These are best read together with the first one:

> 'The exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) (SAḤ) is above and the living being (the inhaled breath) (*jīva*) (HAṂ) is below (the Goddess) Parā, who is emission (*visarga*), is uttering forth (and manifesting in this way) within the two places where they originate. (The yogi attains) the state of fullness by filling (them).' (24)

The concluding verses:

> The exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) should exit and the living being (*apāna*—the inhaled breath) should enter. (Impelled) by the will, its form is crooked.

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[117] See VBh 154–156 (152–155ab).

That Great Goddess is extensive (*dīrghātmā*), both transcendent and immanent (*parāparā*), She is the most excellent sacred field (*kṣetra*) (that is, penetration of Rudra's power).

Following along, and abiding within her, in the sacrificial rite made of Great Bliss, may he, who is penetrated by that Goddess, attain Supreme Bhairava.

It is taught that the repeated recitation (*japa*) of the goddess (who is the Mantra HAṂSAḤ) takes place six hundred and twenty-one thousand times in the course of one day and night. Within the vital breath, it is very difficult to attain.[118]

In this way, using this common literary ploy of 'encapsulation', all the meditations are contained in a way by this one. It is as if observing the movement of the breath and listening to it can combine with all of them. Thus, for example, the practice of observing intense emotive states, how they arise and fall away from consciousness, which is the subject of several meditations, is accompanied by attention to the rhythm of the breathing.

The cluster of meditations on the breath at the beginning of the *Vijñānabhairava* contains several cogent ones related to the flow of the breath. But only one is concerned with its control. Others have to do with what happens between inhalation and exhalation. That is called the Middle Abode (*madhyadhāman*). The two places the breath rests, that is, above at the extremity of exhalation and below in the Heart at the end of inhalation, are connected by the Central Channel (*madhyanāḍī*). These, the yogi is instructed to contemplate (*bhāvayet*). His creative meditation (*bhāvanā*) generates, even as it perceives, another yogic breath that ascends (*udāna*) through a number of stations of ascent, transporting, as it does so, the conscious living being (*jīva*) of the yogi's deeper, essential conscious nature through progressively higher states of consciousness. Ultimately, his limited, contracted and conditioned consciousness encapsulated by his mind (*citta*) dissolves away (*laya*) into the infinite expanse (*ābhoga*) of the Sky (*ākāśa, gagana, kha, vyoman, vi̇yat*) of the Void (*śūnya, śūnyatā, abhāva*) of consciousness (*cit, citi, cetanā*). The meditations in this cluster direct the yogi's attention to stations along his ascent. These may be spatial—points of light, vortices or assemblies of energies (*cakra*), foundations (*ādhāra*), or planes (*bhūmikā*) regularly spaced along the

[118] VBh 154–156 (152–155).

axis of *susumnā* at major common points. Typically, these are, the base of the spine, the navel, heart, throat, oral cavity, centre between the eyebrows, the crown of the head and beyond to the End of the Twelve, twelve fingers distance above. Sometimes more are added in between. The most common example is a location between the base of the genitals and the navel.

The *Vijñānabhairava* knows that the ascending breath can assume the form of Kuṇḍalinī but barely mentions it, although the commentators do. The sole place it does so, is to say that she rises like a lightning flash through all the stations of ascent (VBh 29). I understand this to mean that in this context, when the ascending breath is experienced as Kuṇḍalinī, its rise is instantaneous; it is not the usual laborious, graded ascent. Kuṇḍalinī does not appear in any other meditation, although the Goddess Parā, who is the embodiment of the liberating power (*śakti*) of the Void, does in several key places. This meditation and its mirror at the end of the *Vijñānabhairava* is the best example. The Goddess, the power of the Void, encapsulates and so implicitly pervades all the meditations.

Cognitive Yogas

The *Vijñānabhairava* defines a yogi as one who pays attention to the relationship between subject and object (v. 106 (105)). This means, effectively, attention to perception which bridges the gap between them. Thus, all the meditations, for them to be the practice of a yogi, require this attention in some way, whether implicitly or explicitly, and so are cognitive in a general sense. Specifically cognitive Yogas are the meditations on perception, consciousness, mind and no-mind, centreing, emotions, and recollection. These fall into two categories. One in which perception involves conceptualization and the other that does not. The former, in terms of Abhinavagupta's classification of practice, which we shall examine further ahead, is in the Empowered Means (*Śāktopāya*) and the latter is the Divine Means (*Śāmbhavopāya*). We have observed that the two modalities shift from one to the other with particular ease in the case of meditations on Emptiness. For this reason, it is sometimes hard to decide which one of the two is dominant. The meditations on Emptiness in the domain of objectivity, whether physical or mental in some form, such as, for example, the outer sky and inner space, inevitably begin with some conceptualization. The yogi must first think that the physical and mental emptiness is that of consciousness. Ideally, they result in the

direct experience of that Emptiness which is free of thought constructs. So, they belong to both types in the course of their development.

The movement from one to the other is evident in the search for the centre between one thought and the next or between the perception of two objects. Setting aside the notion of mind, the yogi similarly moves from conceptual to non-conceptual perception. In the domain of the senses, he is directed to experience the emptiness of their objects. This is because perception and its content cannot be distinguished. Mindfulness of this is also a cognitive Yoga. The reflection on the attributes of Deity is a mental cognitive Yoga, as is the identification with it. Meditations on the Self and its cognitive functions are also of this kind. In this and many other ways, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches how to cultivate the cognitive Yoga that frees cognition of conceptualization, allowing the pure consciousness free of them, which is Deity, to dawn, bringing about the identification of the individual soul with it.

There are many meditations in the *Vijñānabhairava* that centre on the identification of the practitioner with the Deity identified as Śiva or, more often, Bhairava. He is instructed to consider that he possesses the Deity's divine attribute of omniscience, omnipresence and the like. Thus, *Vijñānabhairava* instructs the yogi:

> '"Eternal one", "omnipresent one", (self-sufficient) "without support",[119] "all-pervading one", and "Lord of all"—meditating every moment on (these) words, one achieves the goal in accord with (their) meaning.'[120]

This can only be experienced by laying aside the identification of consciousness with one's own body:

> 'After abandoning (all) regard (*āsthā*) for his own body, reflecting (*bhāvayan*) that "I am everywhere" with a firm mind and undistracted vision, (the yogi) is blissful.'[121]

This is possible because the same consciousness is present in others' bodies also and so it pervades their experience as well. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that:

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[119] Śiva is free and independent to be and act in every way. He has no need of any support.

[120] VBh 132 (130).

[121] VBh 104.

'One should experience the consciousness within the body of others also as (within) one's own. Giving up concern for one's own body, one becomes all-pervading (*vyāpin*) within days.'[122]

According to the Āgamas of all types, ranging from the more dualist Siddhānta to the predominantly non-dualist Kaula, this condition is termed the 'Great Pervasion'—*Mahāvyāpti*—and is commonly identified with liberation itself. It is its cardinal feature as freedom from confinement in the psycho-physical organism and so too the subtle body which is, evidently, located in a specific place. Viewed positively, the condition denotes the unconfined presence of absolute consciousness as Deity itself, present pervading the entire cosmic order. The possibility of this condition does not necessarily entail non-dualism. Indeed, pervasion implies two components–that which is pervaded (*vyāpya*) and that which pervades (*vyāpaka*). Consciousness is a pervasive presence in the psycho-physical organism and indeed, in the entire domain of objectivity. On the other hand, for that to be possible, there must be some degree of identification, at least enough for a relationship between them to be possible. The response to this objection is that consciousness is both polarities. As the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches:

'Wherever the mind goes, whether outside or within, Śiva's state is present there. (Śiva) pervades (everything), so where (else) could it go?'[123]

Three Categories of Means to Realization (*upāya*)

This way of classifying the meditations is based on a simple, direct analysis. A more sophisticated one is to classify them into three categories of practice (*upāya*) formulated by Abhinavagupta in the first chapter of his *Tantrāloka*. This is where they are described for the first time and the most extensively. He uses them as the models to frame the following chapters of his *Tantrāloka* that are presented as exemplary expositions and applications of the three categories of practice, one chapter after the other from 3 to 5. They are prefaced by a fourth, most elevated one, No Means (*Anupāya*), in chapter 2. It is the kind of 'subtle' means applied just once by the teacher in a flash of intense grace that liberates the disciple instantly by simply gazing at him. Abhinava sets

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[122] *VBh* 132 (130), 104, 107 (106).

[123] *VBh* 116 (114). *Cf.* also *VBh* 117 and 129.

much store to this 'no-means' means, and it is indeed central to the Krama teachings and Abhinavagupta's Anuttara Trika, as found, for example, in the *Parātrīśikā*. Abhinavagupta sees it, also, in the non-dualist Śaiva philosophy of the *Śivadṛṣṭi* and the Pratyabhijñā. However, it is not found in the *Vijñānabhairava*, just as it is absent in the *Śivasūtra* and *Spandakārikā*.

The reader is referred to the relevant passages in my *Doctrine of Vibration* translation of the *Tantrāloka* and notes, particularly in chapter one, for a detailed presentation of this classification of practice. Just a few words will suffice here. Abhinavagupta develops it on the authority of three types of penetrations of Rudra's energy defined in the *Mālinīvijayottara*. He changes the perspective of the *Mālinīvijayottara* whilst leaving it intact by simply understanding that the three degrees of penetration (*samāveśa*) it teaches are so many categories of means to realization (*upāya*). The bridge between them is the state of consciousness, which bears the same name as the penetration that brings it about, and its function as a means to realization. Śivopādhyāya quotes the same verses from the *Mālinīvijayottara* in his commentary (ad VBh 24), thereby clearly implying that the meditations can be classified into these categories. Indeed, occasionally he does so for some meditations, identifying in which of these states of consciousness they operate. We have lost Kṣemarāja's commentary and so cannot be sure, but there is every reason to believe that he took care to classify all the meditations into these three categories and that this inspired Śivopādhyāya to do the same, although he had not seen the commentary. In modern times, Swami Lakshmanjoo has identified the category to which each meditation belongs, perceiving that this knowledge is an integral and necessary part of understanding practice that often develops from one means or state to another.

It is important to bear in mind that the way Abhinavagupta formulates these categories of practice presumes the basic tenets of the form of Trika he teaches, which is grounded in the non-dualist Śaiva philosophy of the Pratyabhijñā formulated by Utpaladeva. However, the *Vijñānabhairava* considerably predates it and, as we have observed, does not agree with it in several important details. For these categories to be applicable to the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava*, we must either reduce the categories to their most fundamental form, eliminating the Pratyabhijñā elements in their formulation or else elaborate the meditations by applying Abhinavagupta's exegetical methods. This is probably what Kṣemarāja did in his lost commentary. We observe that this is his approach in the introduction that has survived of his

commentary. Thus, he comments on the simple opening statement 'the goddess said' by presenting an account of the four levels of Speech, much as his teacher does in his commentary on the same statement at the beginning of the *Parātrīśikā*.

If we classify a meditation as belonging to *Śāmbhavopāya*, it means that its practice takes place in a state of consciousness free of thought constructs. However, while the *Vijñānabhairava* agrees that that is the Deity's state of consciousness, it nowhere refers to that as a state of supreme subjectivity (*ahaṁbhāva, pūrṇāhantā*), identified as the supreme level of Speech (*parāvāc*). Similarly, if a practice is classified in Śaktopāya, in Abhinavagupta's terms, it would be dominated, as we shall see, by the dynamism of a higher reflective awareness (*vimarśa*) of which the *Vijñānabhairava* knows nothing.

The classification into the three categories of practice as formulated by Abhinavagupta presupposes the concept of a supreme subjectivity, which is a pure ego, devoid of all objectivity and reference to it, and so should not be compatible with the view of reality and practice that the VBh itself presents. Śivopādhyāya (comm. v. 24) sees, quite rightly, that that fundamental concept is the foundation of the categorization of the means and quotes the MVT accordingly for their definition. But this was not taken into consideration at all by the commentators, starting with Kṣemarāja himself, who had a special predilection for them, no doubt, because he had learnt them from his revered master Abhinavagupta. Right at the beginning of his commentary, just after praising Bhairava, Kṣemarāja lauds the unfolding of the Goddess—the power of the Void of Bhairava consciousness—through these means to realization, for it is She, who is ultimately the means to realization, whatever, the meditation or category of realization.

> 'I take refuge in (the Goddess) Śivā who (constantly) reveals the penetrating absorption of Śiva (Himself) (*śāmbhavāveśa*) by Her own unfolding brought about by the Individual and other means (to realization) illumined by (Her) pure, spontaneous flashes of light.'[124]

Here we have clear evidence that Kṣemarāja classified each of the *dhāraṇas*, as he commented on them, into these categories. Ānandabhaṭṭa never does so, whereas Śivopādhyāya does do so occasionally. Although his commentary on the *dhāraṇas* has been lost, we have a good idea to which category

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[124] *Kṣemarāja introductory verse 2.*

Kṣemarāja assigned some of them. These are the ones (close to thirty of them) he quotes in his commentary on the *Śivasūtra*. He classifies the three sections into which the *sūtra*s are divided as relating progressively from the highest (*śāmbhava*), to the lowest (*āṇava*) category of means. Thus, where he quotes a particular *dhāraṇa* implicitly tells us to which category of means he considered it belonged. Swami Lakshmanjoo takes care to tell us in each case, noting how they sometimes lead into one another as the meditation progresses.

Did Kṣemarāja also see this higher subjectivity revealed through the *dhāraṇa*s more extensively? In other words, was his commentary comparatively more set in the perspective of the Pratyabhijñā than the two that have survived? Certainly, he would not explain them from the point of view of Advaita Vedānta, as Ānandabhaṭṭa does in places. What did he make of the *Vijñānabhairava*'s illusionism? Did he resolve that by placing it at the lower 'impure' level to transcend it in the pure one, where all this shines at one with consciousness and so is fully real? How did he cope with the exclusive stillness of Deity's consciousness? His repeated references to the *Vijñānabhairava* throughout his commentary on the *Śivasūtra* was to ensure that they were understood to be deeply compatible, indeed, in some way profoundly related. Similarly, in his commentary on the *Spandakārikā*, he quotes the *Vijñānabhairava* several times, although not as often. For that to be possible, he must inevitably have had to accept that in some way the stillness the *Vijñānabhairava* taught must also have been dynamic, as Ānandabhaṭṭa does, quoting freely from the *Stanzas*. Or did he reserve the *dhāraṇa*s only for the realization of stillness and the *Spanda* sources for its dynamism? More likely, he simply sidestepped the issue, focusing as people who teach and learn the *dhāraṇa*s on practice without going into the details about their ultimate fruit.

Reading his commentary to the introductory verses with such questions in mind, it is immediately apparent that Kṣemarāja had chosen to see the profound dynamic stillness—*Spanda*—as that of *Vijñānabhairava*, the deity of consciousness who unfolds to progressively higher levels in the evolution of withdrawal and progressively lower ones in that of emanation. Thus, setting aside the illusionism of the text he is commenting on, but even so, inevitably aware of it and the repeatedly avowed goal of stillness, he identifies it with Anuttara, at rest within itself, as its own infinite Godhead. There are a number of occasions to refer to the highest reality as the Absolute rather than Deity. Indeed, Kṣemarāja repeatedly insists that the ultimate reality taught in the *Vijñānabhairava* is Anuttara. Thus, he follows his teacher Abhinavagupta who

understands Bhairava to be Anuttara and that this is the ultimate goal of Trika Śaivism, beyond which, there is none more excellent. This fundamental concept stands at the all-embracing summit of the series of familiar concepts found in the terminology of the non-dualist Kashmiri Śaiva exegesis.

Ānandabhaṭṭa refers to the absolute Brahman several times in place of Deity. Śivopādhyāya does occasionally do so, but Ānandabhaṭṭa does so more systematically in order to highlight what he considered to be a strong influence of Advaita Vedānta on its ontology. He is supported in this view by the illusionist view of the *Vijñānabhairava* as we shall see further ahead.[125]

Commenting on the first meditation (v. 24) at length, Śivopādhyāya presents a set of six phases comprising the movement of the breath. He goes on to relate them, two at a time, to the three means, saying:

> 'In this way, in the first and second explanations given here, the Śāmbhava penetration is taught, which is the practice of adhering to the (conscious) nature free of thought constructs. The empowered (means is taught) in the fourth and the fifth (explanations). It is the reflective awareness of the pure thought constructs which are the contemplation that everything is the subjectivity (*ahantā*) (of pure Bhairava consciousness). (The means taught) in the third and sixth (explanations) is the Individual One which is predominantly based on the reflective awareness of particular phonemes.'

Śivopādhyāya goes on to quote the *Mālinīvijayottarā* concerning the three categories of penetrations of the power of grace. These are, in a few words:

Śāmbhavopāya

This category comprises all forms of meditative practice during which the practitioner is free of thought constructs. He is transformed by an intense descent of the power of grace directly from the Deity or the teacher. As Abhinavagupta explains it, this category of practice is centred on the identification with the subjectivity of the dynamism of consciousness of Deity. In this state, there is no objectivity. All that appears is experienced as doing so within consciousness at one with it, like reflections within a mirror by its own inherent will or freedom of the reflective awareness through which it views them. It is the experience of the supreme subjectivity of Śiva/Śambhu. According to Abhi-

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[125] *See* Ānandabhaṭṭa's commentary on v. 24.

navagupta, drawing from the philosophy of the Pratyabhijñā, Śāmbhava consciousness is pure 'I-ness'. As the reflective awareness (*vimarśa*) of consciousness, it is the perpetual cycle of fifty energies of the alphabet, the constituent *parāmaśa*s of this *vimarśa* that are like individual pulsations within the universal pulse (*sāmānyaspanda*) of Śiva consciousness. Although none of these concepts appear in the *Vijñānabhairava*, this latter explanation is worth mentioning to illustrate the subjectivity of the state and practice that takes place in it. The *Vijñānabhairava* refers to it as pure thought-free (*nirvikalpa*) consciousness. It is just this that characterizes *Śāmbhavopāya* in this context.

Śāktopāya

Abhinavagupta teaches that the core of this category of practice is the purification of thought constructs that arise in the course of perception as a result of the power of consciousness to know and perceive objectively, they identify their objects. But while they are illuminating them in that way through the activity of the body, senses and mind, they obscure the universal consciousness of the universal subjectivity experienced in the supreme category of practice (*paropāya*). Practices belonging to this category are mental, and aim at purifying thought constructs so as to make them transparent to the light of the higher subjectivity. As this becomes more clearly evident, the practitioner advances towards the ultimate, most perfectly lucid thought that "I am Śiva and all this is my glory." 'Bhairava's radiant power (*tejas*), which is consciousness, becomes (fully) clear (and evident) to those who reflect upon it again and again.' (TĀ 4/7, see ibid. 4/2–7).

Meditation on emptiness brings about identification with Deity and so belongs to this or the previous category of practice, moving from the former to the latter as thought constructs, grounded in illusory—'empty' perceptions, are absorbed in the pure non-conceptual consciousness of Deity.

Āṇavopāya

This is the category of practices that are sustained by the activity of the individual soul (*aṇu* > *āṇava*) that operates through the body, senses, mind and the vital breath it inhabits and sustains as an individual locus of consciousness in the course of Mantra practice, ritual, Yogas based on the activity and movement of the vital breath and more. The goal is, as always, the achievement of a clear and lucid insight into the ultimate reality of Deity conscious-

ness as one's own essential identity. Kṣemarāja, who greatly venerated his teacher Abhinavagupta, was much taken by his exegetical methods, which he applied in his own extensive and profound exegesis of the texts his teacher had not explained in order to complete his work. In this spirit, he began with a short and then a full commentary on the [126] followed by that on *Śivasūtras*.[127] This was probably followed by his commentary of the *Vijñānabhairava* that preceded the one on the *Netratantra* where it is mentioned.[128]

In this first period of his output, he framed his exegesis in terms of these three categories of practice. Accordingly, he maintained that the three sections, into which the *Śivasūtra* is divided, belong to one of them. Moreover, in the course of his commentary, he quotes all the 51 verses of the *Spandakārikā* and over twenty-five meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava*. Observing to which one of the three sections he allocates them we can have an idea to which category of practice he considered them to belong.

Śivopādhyāya explains that *Śāmbhavopāya*, the first and highest means, comprises all forms of practice in which the yogi engages when he is free of thought constructs. He does not refer to this condition as a higher subjectivity as Abhinavagupta does. However, he does so in his characterization of *Śāktopāya*. He says that it is 'the reflective awareness of pure thought constructs which are the contemplation that everything is the subjectivity (*ahantā*) (of pure Bhairava consciousness).' Ānandabhaṭṭa's explanation is less complex. He simply says that: 'by forgetting all the limiting adjuncts (of the body), he possesses the reflective awareness of (the essence of his subjectivity as) AHAṂ.' It is not clear here if this subjectivity is individual or universal, but I think it is safe to assume that it is the latter. However, there is no reference to this higher subjectivity anywhere in the *Vijñānabhairava* itself. Indeed, commentators also hardly do so, but even so, it is clear that for them the highest expression of the reality taught as the goal of the meditations is, in Pratyabhijñā terms, as when Ānandabhaṭṭa writes:

> 'Bhairava's body should be known to be the 'I' (of supreme subjectivity) which is the repose that is the state which is full (and perfect) Bhairava

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[126] *spandāmṛte carvite 'pi spandasaṁdohato manāk |*
pūrṇas taccarvaṇābhogodyoga eṣa mayāśritaḥ || Intro v.2 of the Spandanirṇaya

[127] *spandasūtrāṇi asmābhiḥ spandanirṇaye samyak nirṇītāni |*
śivasūtrāṇi tu nirṇīyante || ŚSū p. 3.

[128] *śrīvijñānabhairavoddyote 'smābhir darśitam* | Ntu 20/36ab.

whose nature is full (of all things). It is the true nature of (consciousness) devoid of thought constructs which is the full (and all encompassing) subjectivity (*pūrṇāhantā*), the nature of which is one with His own (inherent) Light."[129]

The Practice of Meditation in the *Vijñānabhairava*

The yogas are all grounded in meditation and implemented by it so we must understand in the most general and basic terms the form of meditation the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches, we begin by examining its distinctive terminology. We focus here on three terms–*yukti*, *dhāraṇā* and *bhāvanā*. The first two denote the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava*. The word *bhāvanā* and its cognates denote the practice and act of meditation the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches by means of which the *yukti*s and *dhāraṇā*s are implemented.

Yukti

The word *yukti* is derived from the root *yuj* in the sense of to unite or conjoin. The word yoga is derived from the same root. The dictionary provides a surprising large range of meanings of this word. All of them relate in some way to 'uniting', 'putting together judiciously' and hence 'sound reasoning', and 'logical argument'. It also means a meditative practice in a sense similar to 'yoga', namely, union or application to a higher purpose. Thus, we have five basic meanings, which are as follows:

1) *yukti* as 'method' includes the following meanings: trick, device, artifice, crafty advice, usage, expedient, cunning device, contrivance, application, adaptability, practice, means, and magic.
2) *yukti* as 'meditation' includes: union with the universal spirit, meditation on the supreme being, and contemplation.
3) *yukti* as 'intention' and 'application' includes: suitableness, becoming fit, specification of place and time, propriety, correctness, preparation, motive, emblematic or mystical expression of purpose, and influence.
4) *yukti* as 'sound argument' includes: reason, ground of sound reasoning, deduction from circumstances, and induction.

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[129] Kaumudī ad VBh 21.

5) *yukti* as 'connection' includes: conjunction, connection of words, a sentence, connection of letters, connection of the events in a plot, concatenation of incidents, total, and sum.

In the present context, a *yukti* means a particular practice or meditation that conforms to sound reasoning and so befits the attainment of its goal, which is the manifestation of Deity and ultimate reality in a state of union in some sense with it. Of all these possible meanings, Swami Lakshmanjoo chose to translate the word as 'a trick' which is the first meaning given by the dictionary. By each one of these meditations, the practitioner is projected into a higher, and ultimately supreme, state of consciousness by a 'trick'. This is not just a 'method' or 'procedure' which, aligned with the ultimate nature of reality, is sound and reasonable. Thinking of *yukti* as a trick reminds us that in a deeper sense, there can be no methods or procedures, but even so, each *yukti* is a door through which the infinite shines within the finite and the finite in the infinite.

Dhāraṇā

Again, each meditation is a *dhāraṇā*. The term is well known in the *Yogasūtra* as the second of four levels of development of a meditative state. The first is *pratyāhāra*, which is the 'withdrawal' of the senses from their object. The next is *dhāraṇā*, which is the act of 'sustaining' that inner withdrawal and 'maintaining' the attention directed towards the object of concentration. After that comes *dhyāna*–'meditation' and *samādhi*– in intense concentration by 'gathering together' (*sama-ādhi*) all the faculties of perception and total withdrawal from objectivity. The *Vijñānabhairava* does refer to the practice of withdrawal, although it does not give it a specific term. The sense of the word '*dhyāna*' is the one commonly given in the context of ritual and devotion, namely, the visualization of the deity. The absorption of *samādhi* (some scholars go so far as to call it 'trance') is known to the *Vijñānabhairava* but is characterized as just that, not as the apogee of concentration, as it is in the *Yogasūtra*. Anyway, the *Vijñānabhairava* ignores this classic progression and uses the term *dhāraṇā* just to denote its forms of meditation. Derived from the root *dhṛ* in the sense of to 'sustain' or 'hold', the dictionary supplies the following meanings: supporting, support, steadfastness, abiding, retaining, restraining, protecting, propping up, procuring, possessing, maintaining, understanding, resembling, memory, keeping in the memory, steadfast con-

centration, and righteousness. In short, each of these meditations is a *dhāraṇā* which sustains, protects, maintains by steadfast concentration, the unwavering recollection of the meditation being practiced and, as it becomes more stable, develops into a deepening and sustained understanding of the reality to which it leads. This is close to the concentration taught in the *Yogasūtra* but contains added dimensions. One is the realisation to which it leads. This is positive and strongly experienced; it is not just discernment that the object of concentration is binding and so leads to detachment, as the austere *Yogasūtra* teaches, but to a direct realisation of a reality which is both tranquil and supremely blissful. Moreover, this liberating experience is attained by means of that which brings true spiritual satisfaction to the mind. It is not sustained by aversion to the object of mediation which is invariably, to some degree, painful. Thus, the *Vijñānbhairava* teaches:

> One should sustain (one's) attention (*dhārayet*) wherever the mind is satisfied. It is there that the inherent nature of Supreme Bliss arises.[130]

Bhāvanā

The basic common term we find in the *Vijñānabhairava* for 'meditation' is *bhāvanā* and related forms. The common verbal form is *bhāvayet*, which is the optative 'one should' or 'ought to meditate'. It is found with three prefixes that variously reinforce its meaning. One is *vi-bhāvayet*. The prefix '*vi-*' conveys the sense of 'in particular' as in the word *vi-śeṣa*, which means an 'adjective', 'particular', 'special' or 'specifying'. Another is *anubhāvayet*– 'one should/ought to experience'. The prefix *ati*– expresses the sense of 'beyond' or 'most excellent' as in *atibhāvanā*.

Other relevant dictionary definitions of the word *bhāvanā*, include: right conception or notion, reflection, fancy, that which instigates the memory of something previously perceived, supposition, apprehension, thought, attitude, faith in something. *Bhāvanā* can also mean steeping or saturating any powder with fluid, and the application of perfumes. These meanings can be applied to another one, namely, 'formation of the mind.' *Bhāvanā* is the developing power of meditation by virtue of which the mind is steeped in the state

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[130] *yatra yatra manas tuṣṭir manas tatraiva dhārayet* |
tatra tatra parānandasvarūpaṃ saṃpravartate || 74 (73) ||

to which it leads and ultimately disappears, transformed into it. The sense that emerges is that *bhāvanā* is a process whereby thought constructs are removed to give way to non-conceptual pure consciousness.

Again, from another point of view, the word *bhāvanā* is derived from the root *bhū*, that means to be or exist. The noun *bhāvanā*, which is most often found in the feminine, but can also be masculine, has a literal causal sense of 'bringing into existence'. It is always used with reference to mental events or awareness in some sense and so 'bringing into existence' means imagining, pondering, reflecting, considering, or a general state of mind and being. It is not just the process of attainment it is also what is attained. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that 'the way of thinking (and being)—*bhāvanā*—of one who has entered Śakti's state is (one with it), without division. Then he is Śiva.'[131]

We may simply translate *bhāvanā* to mean 'mediation', which implies that it has an object. Indeed, the verbal form *bhāvayet*—'should or ought to contemplate'—is transitive and its direct object can vary according to the meditation. It may even be one that ordinary perception cannot perceive. One of the functions of *bhāvāna* is to serve as a way of perceiving a deeper, higher reality through the medium of physical perceptions. This is most effectively done by *bhāvanā* on the emptiness of space. As we have seen, this can be various, the outer sky and so too inner space. As the yogi goes on contemplating (*bhāvayan*) it, he attains Bhairava's nature.[132]

One can meditate in a similar way on the Void which is the silence at the beginning and end of the utterance of any letter. Here, instead of directing the yogi to meditate—*bhāvanā*, he is told to experience (*anubhāvayet*). Just as this kind of meditation is indeed essentially mindful experience, similarly, words—*anubhava*—'experience' and *bhāvanā*, both derived from the same root—*bhū*—to be, are closely related in Sanskrit, so one meditation enjoins that:

> One should experience (mindfully) (*anubhāvayet*), the beginning and end of (the utterance of) any phoneme (*varṇa*). Having become the Void by (the power of) the Void (there), the person (free of identification with embodied subjectivity becomes) the form of the Void.[133]

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[131] *VBh 20ab.*

[132] *VBh 87 (86).*

[133] *VBh 40.*

Bhāvanā leads to identification with its object, especially if it is Emptiness, thoughts dissolve away and the mind is emptied. After this meditation on Emptiness, four more similar ones follow. As directives to practice, they are couched in optatives–'one should contemplate'—*bhāvayet*—the Void in all directions, all around the body[134] and within it.[135]

The result and aim are always the same, that is, to empty the mind of thought. Thus, freed of mind, which is essentially thought, the yogi experiences the underlying consciousness free of agitation, tranquil like a still ocean without waves. He practices searching for moments when consciousness is free of thought. Directing his attention into the body, gross and subtle, he catches glimpses of Emptiness. To make that experience stable he should contemplate—*bhāvayet*—the entire body as pervaded by the Void of consciousness free of thought constructs. Indeed, the body, and the universe it epitomizes, is nothing but consciousness. The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that ultimately, in the state of consciousness free of thought, there is no mind, but even so, it is the mind free of thought (*nirvikalpamanas*) that should contemplate it that way.[136] Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* maintains that there are two aspects of the mind. One thinks and cogitates, it has thoughts (*vikalpamanas*), the other does not. The former 'exists' in a way the latter does not. One could say that No Mind is the ultimate consciousness that contemplates its own state and nature free of thought. These two aspects alternate, as one thought moves on to another. The Mind free of thought abides in the centre between

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[134] He who simultaneously contemplates (*bhāvayet*) the void above and the void in the root (foundation below) becomes devoid of mind by the power (of consciousness) that is independent of the body. (44)

One should meditate (*bhāvayet*) firmly, simultaneously, on the void above, the void in the root (foundation below) and the void in the heart, thus, being free of thought, (the liberated state) free of thought dawns. (45)

[135] (If the state) free of thought (*nirvikalpa*), which is nothing but the emptiness within the location of the body, contemplates (*vibhāvayet*) (the mind, made) free of thought (*nirvikalpam*), for just a moment, (the one who is thus free of thought) possesses the nature of (that reality) free of thought. (46) (45)

O gazelle-eyed one! One should reflect (*vibhāvayet*) that all the (organic) substance present in the body is pervaded by the Void; then one's contemplation (*bhāvanā*) (of the Void) should be firm. (47) (46)

[136] One should reflect all at once on all the body or the universe (that is) nothing but consciousness, by the mind (thus) free of thought–the Supreme Awakening! (63)

the thoughts of the thinking mind. The Central Abode is the residence of No Mind, which is the perceiver who, never an object, conjoins and separates the two. It is from here that *bhāvanā* develops. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* directs:

> When one thing has been concealed (*tyakte*) (or abandoned), and consciousness has been (firmly) checked, it should not move on to something (*bhāva*) else. Then meditation (*bhāvanā*) blossoms forth intensely (*ati*) by virtue of (the emptiness of) the state (free of thought) in the centre (between) them (*tanmadhyabhāvena*).[137]

Śivopādhyāya comments: 'Once abandoned meditation and the one who meditates in accord with the teaching of the treatises on yoga (*yogaśāstra*), (the yogi's) contemplation (*bhāvanā*), which is the purification (*saṃskāra*) (that takes place by) repose in the state in the centre, 'blossoms forth' to a most excellent degree (*atiśayena*), that is, is intensely. This is because the goal is repose in the Central Abode, which is devoid of the support of an object of meditation. (This happens) 'by virtue of the state in the centre' between the two conditions (*bhāva*), namely, manifest and unmanifest, by resting in the Central Abode, the nature of which is something (undefinable). Thus, the meaning is that there would be a state of repose in the centre, the nature of which is the pure consciousness of the one perceiver who contemplates and conjoins (*anusaṃdhātṛ*) those two as the one who pervades the condition (*daśā*) at the beginning, middle and end of the two states, manifest and unmanifest.'

The meditation—*bhāvanā*—of Mind directed at some object turns into that of No Mind to the degree the centre shines free of thought and becomes prominent. While No Mind as pure consciousness is invariably spontaneously immersed in *bhāvanā*, the thinking mind can be engaged in *bhāvanā* only occasionally and needs to be directed to do so. This happens when it begins a meditation taught in the *Vijñānabhairava*. It may linger there or quickly move beyond Mind according to the yogi's degree of accomplishment. Before that is achieved, *bhāvanā* is a form of 'thought'–*cintā* that may persist as an aid to meditation. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* at times directs that 'one should think' (*cintayet*) about the object of meditation, especially when it is a relatively gross one. For example, the yogi is directed to 'think' of the inner centres in

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[137] *VBh* v 62 (61).

the subtle body as this *bhāvana* rises through them and they progressively become more subtle.[138]

Similarly, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches meditations involving progressive ascent in the course of the merger of lower, gross levels into higher, more subtle ones. It covers the entire gamut of the Śaiva universe with its worlds, reality levels and corresponding Mantras. Thus, the yogi is directed to think successively of everything in the form of the path (*adhvan*) of the worlds (*bhuvana*) and the rest (of the paths), in (their) gross, subtle and supreme condition until, in the end, the mind dissolves away. (56 (55)) Teachings concerning the Paths as formats of progressive ascents leading to the supreme principle go back to the origins of the Śaivāgama. As such, they are amongst the fundamental paradigms that specifically characterize practice as Tantric and that the *Vijñāna-bhairava* assumes into its own vision of reality. Originally distinct, six patterns of ascent were homologized early on as a standard six-fold Path (*ṣaḍadhvan*). Three are the worlds (*bhuvana*), reality principles (*tattva*) and spheres of forces (*kalā*). They are the objects of denotation of the three Paths of Mantra, its parts and the letters. Another cosmic projection onto the body the yogi 'should think about' is how Fire of Time rises up from the right toe through the body burning up the world orders arranged along its axis until it is all burnt away and the tranquil state of consciousness beyond thought ensues.[139] This is what is normally said to happen in the standard accounts of the deposition of Mantras (*nyāsa*) onto the body. Such meditative practices clearly develop out of a process of essentialization of complex ritual procedures reproduced in the imagination and hence embedded into consciousness, transformed into a basic, simple meditation. This is what is meant by thought here. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches:

> Having meditated (*dhyātvā*) on the true nature (*tattva*) of all this universe as Śiva (who is within all things) right up to the very last ones, all around (in every way) (*samantataḥ*) by (applying) the procedure of the (six) Paths, (there comes about) the Great Awakening (*mahodaya*)! (57 (56))

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[138] **One should think** of that (energy of the vital breath) shining with rays from the Root, (becoming progressively) more subtle than the subtle (beyond name and form), coming to rest within the End of the Twelve (wherein) Bhairava emerges. (28)

[139] **(The yogi) should think** that his own body has been burnt (to ashes) by the Fire of Time that has arisen from the (toe of the right foot which is) the abode of (the Fire of) Time. Then, in the end, the Tranquil One manifests. (52 (51))

The meditative thought may be directed at the gross outer form to move on to the emptiness of consciousness it inwardly contains as, for example, the body.[140] In another meditation, the yogi is directed to **think** that the entire universe, that is, everything, is the Empty container. Thus, like the body is a vessel of the Emptiness of consciousness, so is the universe. Thought dissolves away turning into meditation—*bhāvanā*—as the mind dissolves away into it, the vessel of its merger.[141] It is clear that in this case the Void is the illusory nature of phenomena–'non-existence'. But, although it is Māyā, it is also the vessel of the merger of the mind into consciousness.

Sometimes the thought in which the yogi is engaged is that he is Śiva Himself. Śiva is, of course, beyond thought. However, the world in which he is everywhere present is an object of thought. The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that 'wherever the mind goes, whether outside or within, Śiva's state is present there. (Śiva) pervades (everything), so where (else) could it go?'[142] The movement of the mind is thought. The yogi is directed to recognise that every thought, wherever and to whatever it is directed is in actual fact always directed at Śiva. However, the thinking mind cannot grasp what can only be known to the mind without thought. It must, therefore, begin with the thought of going beyond it. A similar teaching in the *Svacchandatantra* confirms this interpretation:

> '(For such a great yogi,) wherever (his) mind goes, he should think of (the supreme reality) (*cintayet*) which is to be known. As everything is Śiva (*śivamaya*), having moved (from one place), where will it go?'[143]

Let us examine if the circumstances in which the *Vijñānabhairava* directs that the yogi should meditate or contemplate—*bhāvayet* rather than think *cintayet* are different. In the following meditation the yogi is to contemplate, that is, meditate or direct his attention (*bhāvayet*) on how he feels by having

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[140] **One should think** that the part of the body which is the skin serves as (an encompassing) wall, within which there is nothing at all. Meditating (in this way), (the yogi) participates in what cannot be an object of meditation. (48) (47)

[141] O Great Goddess! **one should think** that this universe is Void and that the mind is dissolved away just there itself. Thus, that is the vessel of merger. (58) (57)

[142] VBh 116.

[143] *yatra yatra mano yāti jñeyaṃ tatraiva cintayet |*
calitvā yāsyate kutra sarvaṃ śivamayaṃ yataḥ || SvT 4/313

a good, big meal. He has eaten as much as he can, just like anybody else he feels full, but he is a yogi who maintains a mindful awareness—*bhāvanā*—of the underlying reality of consciousness. So, as with space, *bhāvanā* transforms the corporeal, physical experience into one of consciousness. Thus, he is told to direct his *bhāvanā* to the feeling of being very full and experience it as a state of spiritual plenitude (*bharitāvastha*) and the pleasure of the taste of the food as the aesthetic delight of consciousness. The pleasurable physical experience is thus experienced as 'the great bliss' of consciousness:

> (The yogi) should contemplate (*bhāvayet*) the state (of spiritual) plenitude (he experiences brought about) by the unfolding of the joy which is the savor (of the aesthetic delight) of the outpouring (of consciousness) brought about by eating and drinking. From that, there is great bliss.[144]

Note the use of the present continuous to teach that *bhāvanā* should be maintained as other things and the object of attention go on taking place. The yogi dissolves away his mind as he goes on meditating and perceiving (*vibhāvayan*) his body as having no support while he sits in a chair or lies on a bed (v. 82). In other words, all that seemingly supports the body is illusory. Moreover, the consciousness that that is ultimately realized to be, is also 'without support' because it is the one reality.

Continuing, persistent *bhāvanā* may go on gradually developing or suddenly culminate in a moment of realisation when his mind ceases in a flash and with it the dispositions (*āśaya*) that bind him.[145] An example of the practice of ongoing *bhāvanā* is the one directed at the presence of consciousness in the body.

> The one whose nature (*dharma*) is consciousness is present in all bodies; there is no difference anywhere. Thus, a person who goes on continuously engaged in contemplating (*bhāvayan*) everything as being of that nature conquers phenomenal existence.[146]

This meditation serves as an example of how *bhāvana* can be directed at consciousness even though it is not an object that can be perceived.

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[144] VBh v 72 (71).

[145] Either (sitting) on a seat or (lying) on a bed, meditating (*vibhāvayan*) on his own body as being without support, when the mind ceases, within a moment (the yogi) is free of (all his binding) dispositions (*āśaya*). (82)

[146] VBh v 100 (99).

One should experience the consciousness (*anubhāvayet*) in someone else's body also as (one does within) one's own. Giving up concern for one's own body, one becomes (all) pervading within days.[147]

After abandoning (all) regard (*āsthā*)[148] for one's own body, reflecting (*bhāvayan*)[149] that "I am everywhere" with a firm mind and undistracted vision, one is blissful.

The same meditation can be applied to outer objects. The body is, after all, just one amongst them. The perception of the object is present within it and the intention to see it is in the perceiver. The following meditation reminds the yogi once again:

"The perception present when (perceiving an outer object) such as a jar or the desire and the like within me, is omnipresent (but) is not such (as it appears to be) (*naiva*)." Meditating (*bhāvayan*) in this way, (the yogi) becomes omnipresent.[150]

The cessation of the mind, its dissolving away, the stilling of thought and its merger into the Void, as well as recognition that there is no mind and hence the disappearance of thought,[151] all takes place by means of *bhāvanā* or; to be more precise, the yogi should contemplate (*bhāvayet*) this occurrence. Mind continues to exist because of its plans and aspirations (*āśaya*) based on its Karmic dispositions (82) that *bhāvanā* removes.

One should neither cultivate (*bhāvayet*) aversion nor attachment in any circumstance. The Brahman extends in the centre (in between these extremes) which is free of attachment and hatred.[152]

By pondering on some matter, idea, memory or emotion, it becomes more intense. To harbour an aversion to someone or a prejudice, it grows (126) as

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[147] VBh v 107 (106).

[148] According to both commentators, *āsthā* (lit. 'regard' or 'attachment') means subjectivity (*pramātṛtā*). My translation is literal.

[149] VBh 104 Ānandabhaṭṭa read *bhāvayet* for *bhāvayan*.

[150] VBh v 105 (104).

[151] (The yogi) should reflect (*bhāvayet*) that "there is no inner (mental) organ within me, whether mind (intellect or ego)." (Thus), because there are no thoughts (also), (the yogi) is devoid of them. (94) (93)

[152] VBh v 126 (124).

does attachment. *Bhāvanā* on them is a mistake. This is true of conceptual consciousness, which is the field of most people's *bhāvanā* whereas those who wish to develop the experience of Deity should direct their *bhāvanā* at non-conceptual consciousness. As that grows and develops, the former decreases.

It is worth mentioning at least that *bhāvanā* is in Bhartṛhari's philosophy of language. He is concerned with understanding how language conveys meaning and to so, how it is related to the entities (*vastu*) it denotes. The meaning (*artha*) of a word should coincide with the reality of the entity (*artha*) it denotes. This is achieved according to Bhartṛhari by *bhāvanā*. *Bhāvanā* apperceives the entity which is the reality (*artha*) the word denotes and so gives it meaning even as it renders the word functional. The request for a cup cannot be effective if there is no cup. At the same time, *bhāvanā* is a function of the intellect that cognitive structures based on sensory input and relevant recollection. Thus, it can function independently of outer objects to formulate meaningful concepts. Abhinavagupta, profoundly steeped in Bhartṛhari's philosophy of language, applies it to Mantra. He does this extensively and in great detail. One of his many points of entry is the common usage of the term *bhāvanā* in the domain of yogic and ritual discourse and language.

Abhinavagupta has several insights into the practice of *bhāvanā*. Surveying the meditations of scriptures like the *Vijñānabhairava* and pondering on the nature of practice—whether it be a yoga or ritual—in general, he presents profound reasons for their efficacy both as the source of worldly benefits (*bhoga*) and liberation (*mokṣa*). One is much in line with the *Vijñānabhairava*, namely that liberation is a state of consciousness free of thought constructs attained by the deep *bhāvanā*. In the discussion that follows, he arrives at that by means of the transformation of language into Mantra discovered by examining the discourse of an enlightened teacher.

> If by (deep) contemplation (*bhāvanā*) of the meaning (purpose, goal and ultimate nature of) Mantras (*mantrārtha*), the teacher's discourse becomes like that (of Mantra), then if it is the same in all respects, then pray tell, what is the difference (between them)? ... One contemplates (*bhāvayati*) a real entity (*vastu eva*), not (just) discourse. This (discourse) is taken up (as) a means to make (that reality) manifest (*bhāsanopāya*). Once it has manifested, then what use is it there (in that case)? As (the inner) discourse (of thought) decreases in this way, reality (*vastu*) manifests radiantly as fully evident, authentic (*akṛtima*), non-conceptual (*avikalpaka*) reflective

awareness.[153] What consciousness free of thought constructs (*nirvikalpā*) sees clearly as it is, that is indeed such because such is the nature of even outer reality (*vastu*) also.[154]

Ritual and Yoga

The Śaiva Tantras, as a whole, regardless of the school, are predominantly concerned with ritual. Even so, Yoga is treated as a separate legitimate category of its own. Accordingly, the Siddhāntāgamas are traditionally divided into four sections (*pāda*), one of which is devoted to Yoga. Moreover, forms of Yoga often appear in the context of ritual performance that Āgamas of all kinds teach. Along with this, especially in the Bhairava Tantras that focus on the practices of the *sādhaka*, as does, for example, the *Brahmayāmala*, the repetition of Mantra (*japa*) is often accompanied by more or less elaborate procedures. The *Vijñānabhairava* is a very unusual Tantra because it is entirely concerned with meditation. All practice is done through meditation. The worshipper, deity and worship itself, are all the one reality. In this perspective, rituals can only be forms of meditation, that is, events within consciousness. Thus, the *Vijñānabhairava* declares in beginning:

> One should know that body as it truly is (not in any physical form but as) immaculate and replenishing all things (*viśvapūraṇa*). What (can be) the object of worship and who is satisfied (thereby) within such a supreme (absolute) reality?[155]

The same point is also made in the concluding section at the end:

> O Supreme Goddess, the sacrifice (*yāga*) here is the satisfaction which is bliss. O Pārvatī! the penetration of Rudra's power is that sacred place of

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[153] Abhinava explains here that the purpose of mantras is to transport the practitioner from thought (*vikalpa*) to the inner discourse (*saṁkalpa*) of which it consists, to the manifestation of its object as it truly is, that is, consciousness, and then finally to the authentic, uncreated (*akṛtrima*), non-discursive (*avikalpa*) reality of the mantra-deity, which is essentially the pure reflective awareness of the light of consciousness.

[154] *TĀ* 16/270 (270cd-271ab), 16/280cd-283ab (281–283).

[155] *VBh* 16.

pilgrimage (*kṣetra*) which is supreme contemplation (*parā bhāvanā*) because it removes (*kṣapanāt*) all sins and saves all (living beings) (*trānāt*). Otherwise, what worship (could there be) of that (non-dual) reality and who (could be) satisfied (thereby)?

Those sacrificial substances with which Parā and (Bhairava), the Supreme (Lord), (*parāpara*) are worshipped or with which they are offered libation and he who is the worshipper–all this is one only. What then remains of worship (*pūjana*)?[156]

The meditations do not seek to establish some doctrine or view although, they do unavoidably do so implicitly. Nor can we understand what the *Vijñānabhairava* is teaching and how we should practice without understanding its implicit view of Deity, consciousness and the Self that are the one reality that is realised and becomes manifest as the fulfilment of that practice. Thus, it is essential to understand the underlying view that animates these meditations for the practitioner to be rightly directed to that goal, and not mistake a lower realisation for a higher one. Ritual is not only an outer activity. The officiant is not uncommonly exhorted in the primary scriptural sources and liturgies (*paddhati*) that draw from them, to visualize (*dhyāyet*), meditate (*bhāvayet*) and ponder on, think about (*cintāyet*), imagine (*vibhāvayet*) and recollect (*smaret*) a deeper reality enshrined in the ritual procedure, the ritual implements, offerings, altar, *maṇḍala*, sacrificial jars, the hearth etc, no less than in his own body. The scriptures vary in this respect. In some, this kind of procedure (*prakriyā*) is less common, in others more. Abhinavagupta, who was free to choose from his primary sources, the forms of procedures he considered to be most efficacious, tended to select rites in which this inner activity on the part of the officiant was more prominent. Perhaps, this was another quality that determined Abhinavagupta's selection of the *Mālinīvijayottara* as the supremely exemplary representative of Trika doctrine out of all the Trika Tantras. The *Mālinīvijayottara* is rich in such meditations, lavishly combined with outer ritual action. There is a general sense in the Tantras, especially the Kaula or the Śākta oriented Bhairava Tantras, that this yogic aspect of the ritual procedures they teach is especially important. Indeed, outer ritual and yoga are so closely related in these scriptures that they commonly refer to the officiant as a yogi or as a 'reciter of mantra'

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[156] VBh 150–151 (148–149); 153 (151).

(*mantrin*). Indeed, the *Mālinīvijayottara* considers its own Trika teachings to be Yoga. Thus, it refers to the initiation that is necessary to gain the competence to perform the procedures (*vidhi, vidhāna*) it teaches as 'Śaṁkara's yoga' (MV 4/6). Accordingly, the term *bhāvanā* and its derivatives occur throughout the exposition of the rites it teaches and its meaning is practically the same as we find in our manual of meditations.

A few examples drawn from the *Mālinīvijayottara* will suffice. One is the meditation (*dhāraṇā*) and worship of the reality levels. Chapters 12 and 13 are dedicated to them. Each one is visualized as the yogi rises through them uttering their Mantra. Analogously, the procedure is essentialized into a single meditation in the *Vijñānabhairava*. Again, at the conclusion of a fire sacrifice offered to the Goddess of Speech who pervades the reality levels (*tattva*) from Māyā, which is her domain, down to Earth, the God instructs the Goddess in the *Mālinīvijayottara*:

> 'O Supreme Goddess, having after that dismissed the principle (*tattva*) Vāgīśī, (the officiant) should then imagine (*bhāvayet*) (that the) impure (lower) principle (that comprises the principles from Earth to Māyā) melts away, purified into the pure (level above it comprising the pure reality levels).'[157]

In this way, *bhāvanā* can potentially serve to reinforce or even perform a large variety of ritual actions, indeed practically all of them. However, there are some that only *bhāvanā* can do or complete. One could advance many examples. The best known is the visualization of the Deity that must be performed in the course of the preliminary rites. The term used in that case is usually *dhyāna*, which means 'visualization' as it does 'meditation'. This is a form of *bhāvanā*. Commonly in the course of a ritual, procedure elements that form a part of it need to be connected together. We have seen that *bhāvanā* serves to link the soul to the reality levels and world orders and to the body of the officiant. The function of *bhāvanā*, in that case, is to link together through an act of encompassing awareness, the components into a single whole that it fuses together (*anusandhāna*). An example is the injunction in the *Mālinīvijayottara*:

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[157] *visarjayitvā vāgīśīṁ tattvaṁ tu tadanantaram |*
vilīnaṁ bhāvayec chuddham aśuddhe (*chuddhe aśuddhaṁ*) *parameśvari* || MV 9/69

Elsewhere, we find Māyā in the place of Vāgīśvarī, the Goddess of Speech, indicating their essential identity. See TĀ, 8/299 (298cd-299ab)

Reflect (*bhāvayet*) that the path to be purified of the disciple, the *maṇḍala* and the fire are present there as a single unity, having deposited (them all together), as explained previously, on the body of the disciples.[158]

In the context of ritual action, the visualization of the pervasion of the reality levels takes place one by one, accompanied by the utterance of their corresponding mantra. These are related to three knots on a thread that represent the three Impurities (*mala*)–Ānava, Māyā and Karma. The knots serve to 'tie' these fetters. This is done both by outer action, visible to anybody who may be present. But what makes the rite effective and possible, namely, the identification of the Impurities with the Knots, is achieved by *bhāvanā*. Accordingly, the *Mālinīvijayottara* enjoins:

'Having tied initially, the mass of fetters, that is, the incoming (adventitious) (*āgantu*) (impurity of Karma), the innate (*sahaja*) (impurity of the individual soul) and the empowered one (of Māyā), onto the arms, throat and tip of the topknot (respectively), by means of a thread made of three times three (strands). (Do this) with its own (corresponding) mantra. Then, having invoked (the corresponding) reality level (*tattva*), worshipped (it) and offered libation (to it), the skilled (officiant) should bring the pervasive matrix (*yoni*), that is, the *vidyā* of its matrices that are to be purified, (first) on the path that ends with Māyā, and (then) that same (*vidyā*) on the pure (path beyond).'

'Then (the officiant) should recall how the six-fold path is sustained by (Śiva), and think of the five operations of creation (persistence, withdrawal, grace and obscuration) that are effected (by Śiva) as his own.'[159]

The initiatory rite of placing Śiva's hand on the disciple's head as a means to burn up his fetters and thereby liberating him, is one of the oldest forms of initiation. It is a fine example of how outer ritual action combines with *bhāvanā*. Abhinavagupta describes it as follows:

'Then, having tied a white turban (*sitoṣṇīṣa*) (on his head), (the teacher) should worship (his) hands, one after the other, reciprocally, in order to burn away the fetters and emanate the pure principles. He should (then) worship the Mantras on Śiva's hand, (blazing) in the form of (His) radiant

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[158] MV 9/54, see also MV 9/56–57.

[159] See MV MV 9/55cd-57, 9/39cd-44.

energy (*tejas*). They are present in the innermost circle (*garbhāvaraṇa*) (just as they are,) without limbs, entourage or thrones (*āsana*). After that, he should contemplate (his own) Self as one (alone) and (as seemingly) many (*bhinna*) because of the tasks (it performs), that serve as adjuncts (that appear to divide up its unity). This is as happens with the moon, (which appears to be various according to the stretches of) the water (in which it is reflected)."[160]

This is just one example of how *bhāvanā* is an essential, integral part of ritual, no ritual is possible without it. Indeed, *bhāvanā* is so essential that it can completely replace outer ritual action. However, ritual cannot replace *bhāvanā* because it can never be without it. Moreover, *bhāvanā* is its most effective part and, however little it may appear in the liturgy, it renders the rite effective. The *Vijñānabhairava* concludes with this message by presenting the form *bhāvanā* assumes in the main forms of ritual. The inner rite is essential otherwise, as the *Vijñānabhairava* declares: 'What worship (could there be) of that (non-dual) reality and who (could be) satisfied (thereby)?'[161] Worship, and all forms of ritual that that comprises, must be the activity of consciousness. They cannot be external. It defines the inner repeated recitation of Mantra accordingly:

'O gazelle-eyed Goddess, this procedure (*prakriyā*) (of reciting Mantras and performing rituals) here (in this scripture is considered to be) external and gross only. The contemplation (*bhāvanā*) that is experienced (*bhāvyate*) (and takes place) repeatedly again and again in the supreme state, is here (according to this scripture) the repeated recitation of Mantra (*japa*). It is the spontaneous Sound (of consciousness). Such is the nature of Mantra that should be recited repeatedly."[162]

Inner visualization and meditation (*dhyāna*), is the immobile intellect (146 (144)). Inner worship (*pūjā*) is defined as 'that which makes the intuitive mind (*mati*) firm (and stable) in the Supreme Sky (of transcendental consciousness), free of thought constructs.' (147 (145)) The inner oblation is the offering 'all the elements, the senses and (their) objects etc, along with the mind into

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[160] *TĀ* 16/78–80.

[161] *VBh* 151cd (149cd).

[162] *Vijñānabhairava* 144cd-145 (142cd-143). 145 (143) is quoted in SvTu ad 2/137cd-139ab.

the fire, which is the Abode of the Great Void with the sacrificial ladle of awareness' (149–150ab (147–148ab)). Inner bathing is 'the penetration in all respects of one's own Self into own essential nature' which is freedom, bliss and pure consciousness. (152 (150)).

The Tantras do not normally radically promote *bhāvanā* in this way. That the *Vijñānabhairava* does so is simply in keeping with its character as a manual for meditation. Abhinavagupta supplies an example of how outer ritual action is substituted with *Bhāvanā*. As that is concretely (rather than generically) based on procedures taught in a Tantra, *Bhāvanā* is seen, by some at least, in this case as an alternative, not as a necessary substitute. Abhinavagupta writes:

> (There are yet) other teachers who say that this kind (of ritual action) is (just inwardly) imagined (*bhāvanāmaya*). The teacher need not offer an outer oblation here (in this case). Or else, if he were to offer it separately, that does not (entail) a defect; (indeed,) it is a means (*upāya*) to aid meditation (*bhāvanā*).[163]

In the following example, the Tantra itself allows for *bhāvanā* as an alternative. Abhinavagupta reports:

> 'And (so) it is said in the venerable *Brahmayāmala* that '(the teacher) should imagine (and contemplate) (*bhāvayet*), the universal pervasion common to all the paths[164] in the brief (rite of initiation) (*saṁkṣipta*) also, however, in the (full) sacrificial rite (the projection of the paths) is extensive (in all its details).'[165]

We have discussed how some of the meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava* are partly inspired in some respects by idealist Buddhism. Here we have observed how they can be equally well derived from the rites and Yogas of the Śaivāgamas directly, as we would expect. Scholars have reflected a good deal in the past few decades on the influence Buddhism has had on many aspects and schools of Hinduism over the centuries. True as that may be here, we take note also of Śaivism's own intrinsic development manifest in these meditations, finding a place for both influences each in their own way and to varying degrees.

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[163] TĀ 17/56cd-57.

[164] Basically, this amounts to imagining and thereby experiencing that all the Paths pervade each other equally.

[165] TĀ 18/9.

Reality, Bondage and Liberation

What reality is, whether it be God or not, and how to achieve liberation are two intimately connected questions in practically all the philosophies and theologies of India and so too the rest of Asia. In this perspective, bondage is the fact that we are subject to suffering, disease, old age and death. The immediate cause is Karma, whereas the ultimate one is that we are ignorant in some sense of the nature of reality. Accordingly, it is but natural to seek the answer to these questions.

If reality is one and the same for everybody at all times, as we expect it to be, it is perplexing why the knowledge of reality is so varied. Even within the same school of thought and system of practice. We may be surprised to observe that there is more than one. The *Vijñānabhairava* is a case in point. It proclaims itself to be a Trika scripture and is universally acknowledged to be such. However, the view it presents concerning the nature of reality is, surprisingly, not entirely the same as it came to be so richly formulated by the exegetes of Trika and the three schools—Krama, Spanda, and the Pratyabhijñā—that were associated with it, from the middle of the 9th century CE in Kashmir. These are the final flowering of Śaiva non-dualist philosophy and theology. While each of these three schools, along with Trika itself, have a clear and distinctly recognizable identity, they all maintained that reality is Deity who is consciousness. This consciousness, unlike all the concepts of consciousness of the Ātmavāda schools, is cognitive. It is not just a background, foundational consciousness that supports and sustains what appears within it. It is not, as the the Sāṁkhya and Advaita Vedānta maintain, simply a passive 'being conscious' as opposed to 'unconscious'. According to the Kashmiri Śaiva view, consciousness perceives within itself directly and externally through the activity of the psychophysical organism. Dynamic and creative, the manifest world it creates, sustains and withdraws back into itself is as real in its own modality of existence. Knowing that the *Vijñānabhairava* is a Trika Tantra, we approach it presupposing that it too essentially maintains these fundamental beliefs.

However, although the *Vijñānabhairava* is a Trika Tantra, its view of the nature of reality is not the same as that of the Trika in its post-scriptural, exegetical phase, that is, from the *Śivasūtras* onwards, although it agrees with it in many respects, both in general terms and certain significant details. The *Vijñānabhairava* is a meditation manual, not a textbook of philosophy. It does

not set out to expound a view of the nature of the world, the individual souls and ultimate reality that are the basic concerns of any metaphysics. Nor is it at all concerned with the problems of philosophy, such as causality or epistemology. But although entirely dedicated to the teaching of yogic practice, it does, inevitably, touch upon such matters. That it does so clearly exemplifies that it is necessary to have an understanding of them in order to practice the yoga it teaches, and, indeed, any form of Yoga.

Indeed, a number of meditations read like direct statements of the nature of deity and the world. All religions pray to and contemplate the deity or, as some put it, the ultimate reality or the Absolute, with the conviction that there is a real relationship between it and man. Not fully known or 'seen' until he reaches the highest levels, even so, that Reality is felt to be known to a sufficient degree for that interaction to be possible and real. This implies that reflection on what we have been told about that ultimate Reality and Deity is an effectively elevating form of meditative practice in itself. It is with this understanding that the Deity reveals meditations on His own nature here in the *Vijñānabhairava*. Although often couched in an impersonal third person, as if concerning something objective, Bhairava, the Deity, who is the speaker, is actually talking about himself and the world we share with him. In doing so, he is revealing it to us by elevating us to share in the same direct experience that the Deity has.

In order to understand the *Vijñānabhairava's* distinctive view of reality, we need to note the general points of agreement with the post-scriptural exegetical schools we commonly call collectively 'Kashmiri Śaivism'. Constructed by brilliant philosophers and exegetes, they are treated as primary authorities of non-dualist Śaivism. Although in practice they are hardly less than scripture, the authors themselves would never have allowed their work to be considered that way. Abhinavagupta declares more than once in his *Tantrāloka* that those who know it are liberated and liberators of others. Analogously, Utpaladeva promises the possibility of liberation by recognizing that reality is such as he teaches that it is. Thus, they came to be the centre of the higher religion of the Śaiva community in Kashmir, practically replacing scripture. This was not just because the exegetes were extraordinarily excellent, although it was certainly a major factor. Another is the nature and form of the scriptures which made them hard to understand and therefore, apply. Moreover, they were primarily concerned with ritual that the post-scriptural phase was much less concerned about. Nor could the average

Kashmiri householder practice rites in cremation grounds and the like, as the Tantras they considered the most elevated, taught.

Scriptures concerned with ritual were reduced to three major Tantras—the *Mālinīvijayottara, Netra* and *Svacchanda*. The last two, especially the latter, presented ritual in an extensive and lucid manner. Much more so because of Kṣemarāja's brilliant and extensive commentaries that dealt with both the ritual and yoga taught in them. *Tantrāloka* was Abhinavagupta's sophisticated commentary on the *Mālinīvijayottara*. The non-dualist Śaivites we are focusing on, were also close to the scriptures of the Krama system. Along with them and in many respects modelled on them was the surprisingly extensive production of short tracts that arrogated to themselves the titles and authority of scripture. For three or four generations, these tracts supported the philosophy and religion of the exegetes lending more authority to it not just by their contents repeatedly quoted by them but their essentially non-dualist Śaiva view grounded in dynamic cognitive consciousness the exegetes were promoting. But while many of these tracts did not survive, the *Vijñānabhairava* was carefully preserved, repeatedly copied and interpreted as scripture. This was undoubtedly because it is no less sophisticated than the works of the exegetes and, moreover, it is really a scripture. The *Vijñānabhairava* is consistently non-dualist, whilst maintaining a clear distinction between the practitioner and his goal, at least until it is achieved. This means that the *Vijñānabhairava* is not one of those non-dualisms that preach that realization is an immediate experience that happens spontaneously and is not brought about by any means. On the contrary, the meditations are all understood to be means to realization.

Ethics and the Realisation of the Illusion of Duality

Finally, it is essential to stress that although the *Vijñānabhairava* focuses on Yoga and meditation as the means to spiritual development, and ultimately, the realisation of the liberated state, the foundation of practice that allows access to it is sound discernment and right conduct. This develops by the practice of the meditations as they do by its development. Accordingly, the *Vijñānabhairava* concludes its meditations by outlining the essentials of its ethic.

First of all, the *Vijñānabhairava* insists that the yogi must be devoted to his teacher. This teaching is only meant for one who is so. Otherwise, it must be kept hidden from those who are not devoted to their teacher. Accordingly, the

Vijñānabhairava concludes that teachings should be kept away from the unworthy. This is the reason why it is a secret teaching. Bhairava declares:

> 'Thus, O Goddess! I have told (you about) this most excellent, supreme (immortal) nectar (of immortality). It should never be disclosed to anyone who is a disciple of another (tradition), who is evil and cruel, and is not devoted to (his) master's feet. (But this teaching) should certainly be given without hesitation to those elevated adepts (*vīra*) whose mind is free of thought and are devoted to the masters.[166]

Stressing that the practice of the meditations and the experience to which they give rise, and sustains them, leads to the cultivation of discernment and discrimination for everybody, the *Vijñānabhairava* concludes by effectively distinguishing the householder and renouncer. Although it does not state anywhere that the practice is the special domain of the renouncer, the world is an illusory magic show and true permanent satisfaction and fulfilment (*pūrṇatā*) is only possible by total dedication to the practice to break through the illusion. Accordingly, Bhairava declares:

> 'O Gazelle-eyed One! Having abandoned all this, namely, (one's) village, kingdom, city and country, son, wife and family, one should lay hold of this (teaching). O Goddess! what is the use of these impermanent things? (Only) this supreme wealth is permanent. One can even give (one's) vital breaths (to others but) one should not give (this), the supreme nectar (of immortality).[167]

We have observed that many meditations require engagement with the object and hence the activity of the senses. The most striking examples are those that are practiced in the course of making love. But there are many others, like staring into the sky and observing the unfolding of the activity into emptiness. The following meditation has a general application. Detachment from the senses and immersion into inner consciousness, are the basic prerequisites for the practice of all the meditations. Accordingly, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches:

> (All) association with pleasure, pain and the like occurs through the senses. Therefore, (knowing this), one who, having abandoned the senses, is estab-

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[166] VBh 157–159ab (155cd-157).

[167] VBh 159cd-161ab (158–159).

lished within himself (undistracted by their activity), abides within his own (true) nature.[168]

The Tantric sense of 'non-dualist' is above all the setting aside of differences such as caste. The *Vijñānabhairava* is typical in this respect of Kaula and proto-Kaula Tantras. The *Bhagavadgīta*, although redacted much before the development of the Śaivāgama and other forms of Tantra, is in profound agreement with this view. Here it is presented as a meditation:

'(One who is) equal towards friend and foe (alike), the same when honoured or insulted because the Brahman (which is his true nature is) full (and perfect), having known this, is (always) happy.'[169]

The following meditations are distinctive of the *Vijñānabhairava*, that teaches focusing on the Centre. The yogi is directed to find the centre between two thoughts, two perceptions, two objects, here, he is told to find it between the opposites of aversion and attachment, pleasure and pain:

One should neither cultivate (*bhāvayet*) aversion nor attachment in any circumstance. The Brahman extends in the centre (in between these extremes), which is free of attachment and hatred.[170]

Cast not the mind into suffering nor into pleasure. Know, O Bhairavī! what (that) reality is that remains in the middle (state between them).[171]

Ultimately, the yogi should abandon the opposites of bondage and liberation altogether, for they too, like the world of daily life in which they arise, are just illusory notions:

"There is neither bondage nor liberation for me." These are the frightening (thoughts) of one who is fearful. (But in actual fact), this (world) is

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[168] VBh 136 (134).

[169] *samaḥ śatrau ca mitre ca samo mānāvamānayoḥ |*
brahmaṇaḥ paripūrṇatvād iti jñātvā sukhī bhavet || VBh 125 (123).

Compare this with *Bhagavadgītā* 6/8–9. 'Balance' and 'equality' is a major theme of the ethics of the *Gītā*. If this is achieved, everything is achieved, irrespective of whether the devout practitioner is a householder or renouncer.

[170] VBh 126 (124).

[171] *na cittaṃ nikṣiped duḥkhe na sukhe vā parikṣipet |*
bhairavi jñāyatāṃ madhye kiṃ tattvam avaśiṣyate || 103 ||

(just) a reflection of the intellect, like (the reflection of) the sun in the waters.[172]

Vijñānabhairava and the *Yogasūtras*[173]

Although the *Vijñānabhairava* is a manual of meditations, the word 'yoga', with which we commonly associate the practice of meditation in India, hardly appears anywhere in the text. The word 'yogi' appears in just one verse where a true yogi is defined as being one who pays attention to the relationship between subject and object.[174] This attention is, thus, the common denominator and defining characteristic of all the meditations taught in the *Vijñānabhairava* that thus implicitly define the practitioner in every case as a yogi. The *Yogasūtras* refers to the practices it teaches as 'yoga' which, as is well known, it defines as 'the blocking of the fluctuations of the mind' (*cittavṛttinirodhaḥ*). This amounts essentially to the practice of concentration which is the focus of all the practices taught in the *Yogasūtra*. These have two goals. One is the attainment of liberation from suffering, old age and death. Another is the cultivation and attainment of yogic accomplishments (*siddhi*). The way these two goals are achieved are both equally called Yoga. Degrees of attainment of both types of Yoga are marked by degrees of concentration. For those yogis engaged in the attainment of accomplishments, they apply and develop their power of concentration by focusing on various entities or parts of the body or bodily faculties. For example, those who practice concentration (here called *saṁyama*) on the throat are freed of hunger and thirst. Those who concentrate on strength acquire that of elephants.

The path of accomplishments delineated by the *Yogasūtra* is marked by the attainment of heightening degrees of such yogic powers. On the path to the attainment of liberation, they are considered to be possible incidental by-

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[172] Another translation could be: The mind should neither be engrossed in suffering nor in pleasure. O Bhairavī! One should know the middle (state between them, then) Reality (alone) remains. VBh 135 (133)

[173] Editor's note: This section originally appeared in the middle of the Introduction on discussion around ontology. As it constitutes a distinct unit, it has been moved to the end of the Introduction and given a separate heading.

[174] The perception of subject and object is common to all embodied beings. What distinguishes yogis (from the others, is that they pay careful) attention to (their) relationship. VBh 106 (105)

products that those yogis seeking liberation are advised to ignore. The path of liberation is characterized as a hierarchy of the degree of subtlety of the object of concentration. This begins with a simple, gross outer object and progresses as the capacity for concentration increases to a mental one that is more subtle and correspondingly closer to the subject. The subtlest object is the subject, which in this system is not the ultimate identity or Self of the yogi, it is the ego sense that arrogates to itself the function of the cognitive and operative subjectivity or the body and its outer and inner senses. When the level of contemplative absorption (*samādhi*) on this 'I-ness' (*asmitā*) has developed into a full-blown trance, the individual locus of consciousness detaches from the matrix of objectivity (*prakṛti*) and, liberated from it, is released from all the suffering, transitoriness and the rest of the consequences of objectivized existence. As the yogi progresses and his concentration increases, his understanding of the nature of objectivity and subjectivity develops, leading to the development of appropriate behaviour based on it. The object is perceived more and more to be a highly damaging, binding addiction and consequently, detachment from it becomes increasingly urgent. The yogi that discerns the impediments to that liberating freedom from attachment gradually overcomes them as his detachment and power of concentration increase and so his development spirals upwards. Ultimately, the subject is free of both the domain of objectivity and its own embodied sensorial and mental subjectivity. The residue of pure consciousness, like space, is empty of all constraints and free of the necessities of Karma that lead inevitably to frustration, disease, old age and death. Clearly, the path of the *Yogasūtra* is extremely austere, conceding no value in any way to anything that is objectively perceived which, far from being a possible means to realization, is always, inevitably disruptive. Were it not for its own history of austere and uncompromising interpretations of Christian doctrine, one would wonder why such a narrow path gained so much popularity in the West.

The fundamental ground and operative principle that animates the meditations taught in the *Vijñānabhairava* and renders them effective is not so easily identified and characterized. It is quite different from the praxis taught in the *Yogasūtra*. For one thing, concentration is hardly mentioned. If it is, then it is in the sense of simply paying careful attention to a reality or state with which a particular meditation is concerned. The *Vijñānabhairava* totally lacks any concern for the attainment of accomplishments.

TEXT AND TRANSLATION

Introductory Verses

oṃ namaś cidbhairavapuṣe svātmaśaṃbhave ||

Oṃ! Salutation to one's own Śiva nature, the body is Bhairava who is Consciousness.

bhīrūṇām abhayaprado bhavabhayākrandasya hetus tato
hṛddhāmni prathitaśca bhīravarucām īśo'ntakasyāntakaḥ |
bheraṃ[1] *vāyati yaḥ svayoginivahas tasya prabhur bhairavo*
viśvasmin bharaṇādikṛd vijayate vijñānarūpaḥ paraḥ || 1 ||

He bestows freedom from fear to those who are fearful. He is the cause of the cry of the fear of transmigratory existence. Experienced in the abode of the heart, He is the Lord, the destroyer of death, of those who are in the agony (made manifest by their) cry of fear. The Lord who transports time (causing it to pass) and is transported by his own Yoginīs, is Bhairava. He who, supreme in all this (universe), fills (sustains and withdraws all things) and whose nature is consciousness (*vijñāna*), is victorious.[2]

svairisvacchasphuradbhābhir bhāsitāṇvādyupāyataḥ |
svonmeṣāc chāmbhavāveśaṃ darśayantīṃ śivāṃ śraye || 2 ||

I take refuge in (the Goddess) Śivā who (constantly) reveals the penetrating absorption of Śiva (Himself) (*śāmbhavāveśa*) by Her own unfolding brought

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[1] Read *bheraṃ* as in the citation of this verse in MM p. 173 and SvTu ad 1/1–4ab. There, Kṣemarāja clearly says that *bheraḥ* means 'time' (*kālaḥ*). Cf. TĀ 1/95–99ab (96–100ab).

[2] This is the first benedictory verse of Kṣemarāja's commentary. Śivopādhyāya in his commentary on VBh 130 (128) is very critical of the etymology of Bhairava's name Kṣemarāja presents here. This is largely because it does not take into account the etymology taught in that verse. According to him, Kṣemarāja is advancing a purely human interpretation of the meaning of Bhairava's name whereas the one in the *Vijñānabhairava* is taught by the deity himself.

about by the Individual and other means (to realization)[3] illumined by (Her) pure, spontaneous flashes of light. (2)

āmnāyādyamṛtaiḥ siñcanty antevāsimano'vanīḥ |
jayaty atulatāpacchidgurugīrambudāvalī || 3 ||

The row of rain-bearing clouds of the teacher's words, that destroys immeasurable suffering, sprinkling the earth of his disciple's mind with the nectar of the teachings, triumphs. (3)

dhīmandarācalavalatparamāgamābdher
ullāsyate kimapi yat paramāmṛtaṃ tat |
jīvavacchivatvam adhigantum amutrasadbhiḥ
saṃcaryyatām aviratam paraśaktipūtaiḥ || 4 ||

The supreme and inscrutable nectar pours forth from the ocean of the supreme scriptures churned by the illumined intellect as does the Mandara mountain (the Milky Ocean). May the wise who are here purified by (Bhairava's) supreme power constantly relish that so as to attain Śiva's state (even when) alive. (4)

Ānandabhaṭṭa

śrīvidyāṃ śrīkaṇṭhamūrtiṃ maheśaṃ
somānandaṃ bhūtirājotpaleśau |
kālenāstaṃyātaśivāgamānāṃ
proddhṛtyai ye martyaloke'vatīrṇāḥ || 1 ||
nāmaṃ nāmaṃ tatpadāmbhojareṇuṃ
vākkāyāntarvṛttibhir nuttapaṅke |
cittādarśe mādṛśā dṛṣṭatattvā-
veśāḥ śobhante'niśaṃ satsadaḥsu || 2 ||

Śrīkaṇṭha,[4] who is (the veritable) iconic form of Śrīvidyā, (along with the teachers called) Maheśa, Somānanda, Bhūtirāja and Utpaladeva came down

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[3] See the introduction for a brief overview of these three categories of practice (*upāyabheda*) and their application by Kṣemarāja and other commentators.

[4] Śrīkaṇṭha is the form of Śiva who resides on mount Kailāśa and there teaches the Śaivāgama in all its branches. Ānandabhaṭṭa was a devotee of Śrīvidyā, that is, the

into the mortal world to save the Śivāgama that in the course of time had receded (into obscurity). Verily indeed, the pollen of their lotus feet for those like me who are possessed by the Reality (they) have perceived, looks constantly beautiful within the mirror of the mind of the wise from which the mud has been removed by the inner activities of (their) bodies and speech.

śrīlakṣmaṇābhinavaguptamukhāṃs trikārtha-
tattvānuśāsanamahāmbudhiśītaraśmīn |
dhyātvā gurūñ jaḍahṛdabjavikāsanodya-
dbhāsvatprabhān vitimirīkṛtaviśvamārgān || 3 ||
śarvānanāmbujaviniḥsṛtadhāraṇānāṃ
gūḍhāyane'paravibhān avalokanena |
saṃracyate pratipadaṃ skhalatāpi tāvad
vijñānabhairavanaye padadīpikeyam || 4 || (yugalakam)

Having contemplated the masters, foremost of which are the venerable Lakṣmaṇa and Abhinavagupta, the rays (of their knowledge) cool with (the water of) the great ocean of the teachings of the true (essence) of Trika doctrine, whose light has arisen radiant from the blooming of the lotus of the heart of the dull (and ignorant), have removed the darkness from all the Paths (to liberation). This light on the words, though faltering at each step, of the teaching (*naya*) of the *Vijñānabhairava* is made by examining the other lights on the hidden path of the meditations that have come forth from the lotus (like) face of (Śiva, called) Śarva.

Kṣemarāja

Here (according to these teachings), the venerable Bhairava of Consciousness has inwardly generated (this unfolding) creation (*prapañca*) consisting of endless numbers of secondary (associated) creations on the foundation of the radiant pulse of (His) supreme power which is the reflective awareness of full and perfect subjectivity (*pūrṇāhaṃvimarśa*). By withdrawing the previous stages successively and, thereby, unfolding the subsequent states, it is

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Goddess Tripurasundarī, as well as being a Trika Śaivite who was influenced by Advaita Vedānta. Here he seeks to reconcile these two traditions by identifying the the god Śrīkaṇṭha with the Goddess Tripurā.

His nature to manifest the planes of transcendental (*anāśrita*) (Śiva), Sadāśiva and Īśvara, the essence of which are the powers of will, knowledge and action (respectively).

He unfolds (and discloses) the penetrative absorption into the union of Śiva and Śakti (*rudrayāmala*) that has emerged by the grace that causes the power of the limited perceiver to be submerged (into consciousness). (This takes place) by the radiant manifestation (*sphuraṇa*) of the unfolding of Īśvara and the rest (of the pure principles, i.e. Sadāśiva and Anāśrita) by virtue of the (ongoing) closure (of the lower levels of Speech) beginning with the Corporeal One (*vaikharī*).

(He unfolds that), as (He does) the cosmic state, by the radiant manifestation that culminates in the manifestation of objectivity and is heralded by the manifestation of the planes of the Speech of Vision (*paśyantī*) and the rest (of the levels of Speech in descending order). Such is the power of the perceiver which conceals that stage (of development) and is the seed (of all that follows). This is the Lord's agency of the five activities (of creation, persistence, withdrawal, grace and concealment) taught in the non-dual traditions (*advayanaya*).

The Goddess of Consciousness who is the illumination and the rest (that takes place) there on the plane of the Speech of Vision (*paśyantī*) onwards is, as She awakens, the one who questions (Bhairava). (Although) her own Light (*svābhāsā*) is always on the supreme plane, she is divided within Herself (as the one who questions) and the other (who replies). She is not in the domain of the outer or inner senses and so is as if imperceivable (*parokṣā*) whereas, in terms of the time (it takes to descend through the levels of Speech) from that of Vision onwards, (in the statement 'the goddess said') she is as if (a thing of the) past. (However,) as there is no association (in her case with the passage of time) ranging from a month to a cosmic age (*kalpa*) in relation to (the respective cycles of) the breath (to which) every embodied soul (*rudrakṣetrajña*) (is subject), she is as if (ever) present.[5]

To the degree in which she contemplates (Her own nature as Speech) in order to penetrate (onto the plane of articulate speech), it is as if she said "I am asleep" and (waking up) "I myself am the Goddess of Consciousness who

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[5] *The projection of cycles of time into that of the breath is the subject of chapter six of the Tantrāloka.*

wishes to manifest on the plane of (the Speech of) Vision and the rest and so reflects on the secret of (the state of consciousness implied in the statement) "(the goddess) said" shining as the oneness of the Supreme Goddess (*bhaṭṭārikā*) who, (previously) unmanifest, has manifest (*asphuṭasphurita*). Awake in this way, by virtue of (her state) free of craving, (she) makes all cry out in fear. "I alone (am that Goddess), whose nature is Bhairava, explained (above) by way of the etymology (of his name), who said (what follows)."

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Here the author of the scripture is Bhairava Himself who, by (his) beautifully diverse blue, yellow and other lights, that are internal and external, and by (his) actions, (each with its own) purpose, has concealed Himself. Then, having done so, may (his) devotees who, like the mass of the rays of the sun, have emerged externally, enter again and attain that oneness. (This they do) by realising their own essential nature through this Path of Knowledge in the form of the one who questions, by means of the powers of knowledge and action that are the expansions of His own consciousness. He says (the following) with this purpose in mind.

Introduction (1–23)

श्रुतं देव मया सर्वं रुद्रयामलसंभवम् ।
त्रिकभेदमशेषेण सारात्सारविभागशः ॥ १ ॥
अद्यापि न निवृत्तो मे संशयः परमेश्वर ।

Śrīdevyuvāca:

śrutaṃ deva mayā sarvaṃ rudrayāmalasaṃbhavam |
trikabhedam aśeṣeṇa sārāt sāraṃ vibhāgaśaḥ || 1 ||
ādyāpi na nivṛtto me saṃśayaḥ parameśvara |

The Goddess said:

O god, I have heard all that has originated from the *Rudrayāmala*[6] (Tantra), that is the Trika category (of your revelation). (But although I have heard) the

[6] One could understand *rudrayāmala* here to mean the 'Rudra couple' i.e. the union of Śiva and Śakti. However, there can be no doubt that the Tantra by that name is

essence of its essence entirely, part by part, (rising through the higher levels of scripture), even now, O Supreme Lord, my doubt has not been quelled. (1–2ab)

Word-for-word meaning: *deva* O god, *śrutaṃ mayā* I have heard *sarvaṃ* all *rudrayāmalasaṃbhavam* that has originated from the *Rudrayāmala* (Tantra) that is, *trikabhedam* the Trika category (of your revelation) *sārāt sāraṃ* (but although I have heard) the essence of its essence *aśeṣeṇa* entirely, *vibhāgaśaḥ* part by part, (rising through the higher levels of scripture), *ādyāpi* even now, *parameśvara* O Supreme Lord, *me saṃśayaḥ* my doubt *na nivṛtto* has not been quelled. (1–2ab)

Kṣemarāja

(The Tantra begins with) **'the venerable goddess said': "'O god, I have heard'"** etc. (Responding,) **'Bhairava said'** repeating (twice) at the beginning: **"well done! well done!"** (The goddess said) 'Today I have known the heart of all the Trika category (of your revelation) (*trikabheda*).' The (very) life of the inner scripture is the supreme relationship (between the teacher and the taught, who in this case are the god and the goddess). As is stated at the end: 'having said this, the goddess, (thus) made blissful, embraced Śiva' (163ab (161cd)). The purpose (*prayojana*) (of all the practices taught here is to achieve) penetration (*āveśa*) into *Vijñānabhairava*, and so (it is for this reason that) this scripture bears His name. Assuming the plane of the Heart of the (Lord) who brought (this) Tantra down (to earth), the Goddess (*bhaṭṭārikā*) Parā alludes (to this), by successively putting together the appropriate words grounded in reality (*vastupūrvaka*).

'O God', who is my own Self and nature is to play the game of illumining the universe. He is the oneness of Rudra, who dispels all illness, and His power. From (that) couple (*yāmala*) that is:

'From Śiva, the supreme cause, whose body is unseen and tranquil, has come forth the scripture in the form of sound (*dhvani*), which is supremely hard to acquire.'[7]

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meant here because the Goddess tells us very clearly at the end of the *Vijñānabhairava* that "today I have understood the essence of the *Rudrayāmalatantra*." 162ab (160ab)

[7] Cf. SvT 8/27cd-28ab quoted in TĀv ad 35/26–27. See note there.

That is the origin (of the scriptures) according to the teachings of (this) tradition. In other words, (the source of all the scriptures is) Trika's scripture (*śāstra*), consisting of the three principles of Nara, Śakti and Śiva, the essence of which are the three powers (Aparā, Parāparā and) Parā (respectively). Its (diverse) variety is the (manner in which) it is divided up (into types) according to whether (particular Trika scriptures) teach (liberating) knowledge or rituals or other matters (of practice, such as Yoga) that should be adopted. (Concerning) that too, I have heard everything in its entirety. How is it that Trika scripture is thus the essence (of the scriptures), as stated (in the following citation), **'the essence of its essence, part by part, (rising through the higher levels of scripture)'**? (In response to this question, Trika scripture declares):

'Śaiva (scripture) is higher than the Veda and the like. (Higher than) Śaiva is (the current scripture of) the Left and the Right. Kaula is higher than the Right and higher than Kaula is Trika.'

There also (amongst root Trika scriptures, namely) the *Siddhā*, *Mālinī* and *Uttara* (i.e., *Mālinīvijayottara*) etc, (Tantras) are progressively more excellent because the teachings concerning the excellence of knowledge (are increasingly) exulted (in each successive one).

With the intention of (finding an answer to the question) concerning what reality (and the truth) is like here (in this tradition), (the goddess) raises that same doubt (in detail. She does so by) introducing another scripture associated (with these three) by applying the intellect (*dhī*) that is skilled in examining the meaning of many scriptures, the practices (*cara*) of which have been understood. (Thus, she asks):

किं रूपं तत्त्वतो देव शब्दराशिकलामयम् ॥ २ ॥
किं वा नवात्मभेदेन भैरवे भैरवाकृतौ ।
त्रिशिरोभेदभिन्नं वा किं वा शक्तित्रयात्मकम् ॥ ३ ॥

kiṃ rūpaṃ tattvato deva śabdarāśikalāmayam || 2 ||
kiṃ vā navātmabhedena bhairave bhairavākṛtau |
triśirobhedabhinnaṃ vā kiṃ vā śaktitrayātmakam || 3 ||

O god, what, in actual fact, is (Bhairava's real) form (*rūpa*)? (Does) it consist of the energies of the Assembly of (the fifty phonemic) Sounds (*śabdarāśi*)? Or else is it within Bhairava's (frightening) form as the (Bhairava) Navātman (mantra)? Or does it differ (*bhinna*) (from the Trika mantras taught) in the

Triśirobhairava division (of the Trika)? Or is it the three energies (Parā, Parāparā and Aparā) (over whom He presides)? (2cd-3)

Word-for-word meaning: *deva* O god, *kiṃ tattvato* what, in actual fact, is *rūpaṃ* (Bhairava's real) form (*rūpa*)? *śabdarāśikalāmayam* (Does) it consist of the energies of the Assembly of (the fifty phonemic) Sounds (*śabdarāśi*)? *kiṃ vā* Or else is it *bhairave* within Bhairava's *bhairavākṛtau* (frightening) form *navātmabhedena* as the (Bhairava) Navātman (mantra)? *vā* Or *triśirobhedabhinnaṃ* does it differ (*bhinna*) (from the Trika mantras taught) in the *Triśirobhairavatantra*? *kiṃ vā* Or is it *śaktitrayātmakam* the three energies (Parā, Parāparā and Aparā) (over whom He presides)?

Kṣemarāja

'Bhairava's (frightening) form' is Lord Bhairava who is the dynamic formation of transmigratory existence. **'The energies of the Aggregate of (the fifty phonemic) Sounds'**, that is, the (phonemes) beginning with A and ending with KṢ are, from the point of view of (their ultimate) true nature, the energies of (forms of) reflective awareness, namely, Anuttara (A), Bliss (Ā), will (I) and the rest (of the phonemes unfolding as the forms of reflective awareness of the subjectivity of AHAṂ ('I'). They are the unfolding expansion of the universe which has encompassed all that consists of words and (the things they) denote. What could the nature (*prakṛtaṃ rūpaṃ*), that is, **'form (*rūpa*)'** of the Bhairava of Consciousness be—being (such as it is) because its essential nature is the power of reflective awareness?

Or is (His) form (such) because He is Navātman, the king of Mantras within which (all) the Six Paths are contemplated by the reflective awareness of the nine realities (represented by its nine letters) beginning with Nature and ending with Śiva? Or is it the different (*bhinna*), particular (Trika) Mantra that is taught in the *Triśirobhairavatantra* that contemplates the three realities beginning with Nara (followed by, Śakti and Śiva) that have embraced everything (within themselves). Or is it the three powers, Parā and the rest that preside over that?

नादबिन्दुमयं वापि किं चन्द्रार्धनिरोधिकाः ।
चक्रारूढमनच्कं वा किं वा शक्तिस्वरूपकम् ॥ ४ ॥

nādabindumayaṃ vāpi kiṃ candrārdhanirodhikāḥ |
cakrārūḍham anackaṃ vā kiṃ vā śaktisvarūpakam || 4 ||

Or is it made of Sound (*nāda*) and the Point (*bindu*)? Or is it the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*) and the Obstructress (*nirodhikā*) (and the other subtle levels of the utterance of OṂ)? Or is it the Unstruck Sound (of the consonants), mounted on the Wheel (of the vowels) or else is it *śakti*? (4)

Word-for-word meaning: *vāpi* Or is it *nādabindumayaṃ* made of Sound (*nāda*) and the Point (*bindu*)? *kiṃ* Or is it *candrārdhanirodhikāḥ* the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*) and the Obstructress (*nirodhikā*) (and the other subtle levels of the utterance of OṂ)? *vā* Or is it *anackaṃ* the Unstruck Sound (of the consonants), *cakrārūḍham* mounted on the Wheel (of the vowels) *kiṃ vā* or else *śaktisvarūpakam* is it *śakti*? (4)

Or else is (Bhairava's) nature Sound consisting of the reflective awareness which is one with all (the words that are) denotators (of meaning) and the Point which is the Light (of consciousness), one with all the objects of denotation in the universe, which is the universal vitality (*vīrya*) of all the assemblies (*cakra*) of Mantras? Or is the form within Bhairava, in actual fact, the Obstructress and the Half Moon that are this unfolding development of Sound and the Point?

There, the Half Moon (is the state that arises) when the predominance of the object of denotation of the Point (*bindu*), which is the undivided Light of all objects of denotation, comes to rest to some degree by assuming the condition of Sound. After that also, when the 'crookedness' of objectivity ceases, Nirodhikā (the Obstructress), which is a clear straight line, (arises blocking) entry into Sound to limited yogis. For others (that is, unconditioned yogis) it blocks entry onto the plane of duality and so is called (the Obstructress) in that way. The plural here (has the sense of) 'etc.' The energy (*kalā*) above Sound is marked by the names End of Sound (Nādānta), Power (Śakti), the Pervasive One (Vyāpinī) and With Mind (Samanā). There, the End of Sound is a very subtle Sound (that arises) when Sound, which is the pervasion of Word, is in the process of coming to rest.[8]

Śakti[9] (arises) when it is (completely) at rest, its nature, the pervasion of the (inner sensation of) Touch that (arises) as Sound unfolds. That same (Power) is the Pervasive One (that arises) due to the attainment of the pervasion of the

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[8] See my notes on TĀ 1/65 (66) ff. And 5/56cd-57ab for an exposition of this standard, quite common progression of levels of Sound. Also Dyczkowski 1992b: 251 ff.

[9] Here 'Śakti' is the name for the level of Sound just before the Pervasive One (*vyāpinī*). Śiva's universal Śakti is not meant here.

Sky (of consciousness), which is unconditioned by the body. Samanā (With Mind) (arises) when penetration into awakened consciousness, which is the instrumental cause of pure cogitation alone, (takes place). This is the secret of the energies (*kalā*) of Mantra consisting of the Half Moon and the rest.

Once contemplated the Lord's nature in this way by means of the object of knowledge associated with the vitality of the phonemes (*mātṛkā*) and Mantra and so too by means of the Great Mantra, upon which (the yogi) should meditate, it is deposited in the Wheels of Birth and the rest (of the yogic centres in the body) and mounted on them by meditating on the letters (of the alphabet). Is (Bhairava's) nature Unstruck Sound consisting of Sound which is the energy of HA?[10] Or else, what is the form within Bhairava that is (that) very evident energy of which all crookedness has been quelled?

Once contemplated (Bhairava's nature) by means of the power of the Great Mantra upon which (the yogi) should meditate, (he should then go on) to contemplate it also by means of the **Supreme Power (*parāśakti*) of Anuttara that excels all.** In order to do that, he says:

परापरायाः सकलम् अपरायाश्च वा पुनः ।
पराया यदि तद्वत्स्यात् परत्वं तद्विरुध्यते ॥ ५ ॥

parāparāyāḥ sakalam aparāyāśca vā punaḥ |
parāyā yadi tadvat syāt paratvaṃ tad virudhyate || 5 ||

On the contrary, if Parā were to have a differentiated form (*sakala*) like that of Parāparā or Aparā that would contradict her (supreme) absolute status (*paratva*). (5)

Word-for-word meaning: *punaḥ* On the contrary, *yadi* if *parāyā* Parā *syāt* were to have a *sakalam* differentiated form (*sakala*) *tadvat* like that of *parāparāyāḥ aparāyāś ca vā* of Parāparā or Aparā *tad* that *virudhyate* would contradict her (supreme) absolute status (*paratva*). (5)

न हि वर्णविभेदेन देहभेदेन वा भवेत् ।
परत्वं निष्कलत्वेन सकलत्वे न तद्भवेत् ॥ ६ ॥
प्रसादं कुरु मे नाथ निःशेषं छिन्धि संशयम् ।

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[10] Kṣemarāja is referring to *visarga*. Literally meaning 'emission', it is the power of universal consciousness to pour forth within itself as all things without this diminishing or altering it in any way.

na hi varṇavibhedena dehabhedena vā bhavet |
paratvaṃ niṣkalatvena sakalatvaṃ na[11] *tadbhavet || 6 ||*
prasādaṃ kuru me nātha niḥśeṣaṃ chindhi saṃśayam |

Differentiated by the phonemes (of mantras) or by a bodily form (Parā would not possess her inherently supreme) absolute status. (Essentially) undifferentiated by nature, She cannot be made of parts (such that Parā may have an iconic form). O Lord, be gracious and dispel my doubts entirely. (6–7ab)

Word-for-word meaning: *varṇavibhedena* Differentiated by the phonemes (of mantras) *vā* or *dehabhedena* by a bodily form (Parā would not possess her inherently) *paratvaṃ na bhavet* (supreme) absolute status. *niṣkalatvena* (Essentially) undifferentiated by nature, *sakalatvaṃ na tad bhavet* She cannot be made of parts (such that Parā may have an iconic form). *nātha* O Lord, *prasādaṃ kuru* be gracious and *chindhi* dispel *me* my *saṃśayam* doubts *niḥśeṣaṃ* entirely.

The differentiated (*sakala*) form of the goddess Parā which consists of particular Mantras that are the object of meditation, taught in the venerable *Parātriṃśikā* and elsewhere, are those of the goddess Parāparā. Or else, if that is not possible because her supreme (transcendental) aspect (beyond Mantra and form) predominates, it is considered to be that of the goddess Aparā. If, however, one wishes that to be (the form) of the goddess Parā also, Her supreme state would (be nothing more than) just a name (not actually real).[12]

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[11] Read *sakalatvaṃ na* for *sakalatvena*.

[12] The great deities are considered to have two fundamental aspects. One is called *niṣkala*—'without parts' or 'differentiated energies' and the other *sakala*, its opposite. The latter has a form essentially made of its Mantra, limbs and faces etc. and a visualized form, in which it is worshipped and appears to the devotee. The *niṣkala* is the deity's essential, absolute nature. Kṣemarāja explains that the point the *Vijñānabhairava* is making here is that Parā, as the highest goddess of the Trika triad of goddesses, is '*parā*' supreme—because she is purely transcendental. She is the Void of the infinite expanse of pure consciousness. Bhairava is saying that the Parā to which he refers is not the Mantra SAUḤ that embodies her as is the Parā of the *Parātrīśikā* for example where this is the focus of attention. The Tantras teach that Parā, like the other two goddesses—Parāparā and Aparā—has Mantras associated with her, but Bhairava insists that for the praxis taught in these meditations these are not ultimate. Although Parāparā has her own Mantra, as does Parā and

Her supreme state apparently decreases by (her assuming the form of) particular colours, especially white,[13] (by assuming the form of) phonemes, a particular body or form or by assuming a particular location in the body such as the End of the Twelve.[14] Rather, (on the contrary), (if she were to not be

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Aparā, according to Kṣemarāja, in actual fact they belong to the domain of the middle goddess Parāparā who is, as it were, made of two components—Parā and Aparā, as well as Parāparā herself. If the transcendental, undifferentiated, *niṣkala* aspect of Parā predominates, then the Mantric aspect must be in the domain of Aparā. Any determination of Parā's form, even as her Mantra, brings her down from her undifferentiated, *niṣkala* level. This is a surprising view as there are repeated references not just to the Mantric form of Parā, that is, the seed syllable SAUḤ, the Tantras also describe her visualized form, as they do that of the other two goddesses. Moreover, she is represented as residing in the End of the Twelve, raining down nectar onto her devotee and so too in the Heart. From these two places she emits herself as the vital breaths.

Moreover, a few mediations appear at first sight to incorporate Mantras. However this is not so. The *Vijñānabhairava* does not teach their repeated recitation. Nor, indeed, is it concerned with Mantra itself and its parts. It is interested, as usual, only in directing the mind to the Emptiness of the Silence at the end of their utterance, as happens in the following meditation: By uttering the Void (at the end) of the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), the Point (*bindu*), Sound (*nāda*), and the End (of Sound) of an entire syllabic (*piṇḍa*) mantra in accord with the sequence of (its) gross letters, (the yogi) becomes Śiva. (VBh 42)

The same Void is Silence free of thought constructs at the end of the utterance of a *praṇava* such as OṂ, HRĪṂ or HŪṂ:

> 'O Bhairavī, by uttering a *praṇava* or the like and by meditating on the Void at the end of (its) prolated sound, (the yogi) attains Emptiness by means of the Void which is (Śiva's) supreme power.' (VBh 39)

The status of these sounds as Mantras is secondary, not essential. The silence at the end of any prolated sound such as that of the very low note of a *vīṇā* (ibid. 41) or any letter of the alphabet can serve equally well. Again, by meditating on the word 'Bhairava' for a long time, the *Vijñānabhairava* promises that one becomes Śiva (VBh 130 (128)). This is the Deity's name, not a Mantra.

[13] Representing the three *guṇa*s the triadic Trika goddess as Parā is white, as Parāparā red and as Apara, black.

[14] There are two major forms of the End of the Twelve. One is the 'external End of the Twelve' (*bāhyadvādaśānta*). This is set at a distance of twelve fingers' breadth from the point of exit of the breath from the body. The breath is understood to begin its

fundamentally) devoid of differentiation (*kalanā*), (she would not be Parā and so) it is impossible for her to be in the differentiated (*sakala* state).

In this way, the Goddess of Consciousness is the reality that is made propitious by one who contemplates the Heart, which is the reality (taught in) all the Āgamas, by reflecting (on its nature). Wishing to enter into her own completely full Vijñānabhairava nature, she asks (Bhairava) to quell all this doubt with (its) nine parts (in the form of these alternatives), and to make His own nature, which has been purified by the quelling of the dirt of Māyā and Mahāmāyā, clearly apparent to her.

The goddess whose nature has been declared to be one's own and whose freedom from craving is unfolding under the influence of contemplation, has in this way, for the aforestated reason, attained Bhairava's being. (This god-

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exit from the bridge of the nose. The first four finger breadths therefore cover the length of the nose. The remaining eight are outside. By placing one's hand at this distance from the nose one can feel the subtle sensation of the exhaled breath making contact with it.

The other End of the Twelve is the upper one. This is the so-called Cavity of Brahmā (*brahmarandhra*). It is located at the highest part of the head, that is, at the apex of the body. In the physical body it marks the suture of the skull that closes soon after birth. According to the common ancient Indian physiology taught in the Upaṇisads, it marks the point of entry of the vital force into the body which carries with it the living being (*jīva*) who is to inhabit it. At death it is generally believed that the vital force, and with it the individual soul, can exit from the body through one or other of its nine cavities, namely, the two nostrils, two ears, two eyes, genitals and anus. The ninth is the Cavity of Brahmā. By exiting through that there is no further re-birth.

The upper End of the Twelve is also said to be located at a distance of twelve finger breadths above this Cavity. The two possible locations lead to some confusion, but this may generally be avoided by observing the context. But whichever of the two is meant, both are said to be the place from which the emission (*visarga*) of the breath, consciousness and vitality into the body takes place, and so too the emission of contracted, individual consciousness into the unconfined expanse of Śiva consciousness. Thus, like the Heart, the End of the Twelve is not just a power centre in the body. The Heart is the location of the core of consciousness. It is the centre of the individual's Being which, unconfined in any way, is the infinite expanse of God consciousness within which all things rest and manifest. Thus, the two polarities at the two extremes fuse in the movement between them, which is at first external and then ultimately recognised to be within.

dess) said (these things). All (the general) intended sense is such, namely, during the entire course of worldly activities, consciousness is skillful in (communicating by means of) questions and answers, **the (ultimate) object of which is the meaning (and nature of) Anuttara.**[15] This is (our) specific (teaching). That is said in the venerable *Svacchandatantra*:

'The God Sadāśiva, having placed himself on the plane of the teacher, the Tantra (was revealed) in accord with the diversity of its foundation, as statements made of words that first (enquire and then) respond.'[16]

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[15] Anuttara is the Absolute that Abhinavagupta expounds in great depth throughout his work on Trika, especially in the *Parātrīśikā* that he calls *anuttaraprakriyā*—'the modality of (Trika) practice centred on Anuttara.' Although some reference to the Absolute in the Śaivāgama as Anuttara may occur, it is very rare and when it does, it is often dubious. Meaning 'the unsurpassed', it is, on the contrary, a common term in the Buddhist Anuttarayoga Tantras to denote the Void. It is apt from the Buddhist perspective as it simply refers to the Void as superlative avoiding having to attribute an ontological identity to it. Somānanda's commentary on the *Parātrīśikā* has not come down to us so we do not know how extensively he went into the concept, if at all. Certainly, the concept of Anuttara in the Śaiva context was largely a product of Abhinavagupta's genius. The boundary between exegesis and the discovery of what is already intended is very thin. The explanation is often understood to be already in its object. Certainly, Kṣemarāja took those to be so, for granted. There is no reference anywhere in the *Vijñānabhairava* to Anuttara just as there is no reference to absolute 'I' consciousness as Supreme Speech, identified with Parā.

[16] SvT 8/31cd-32ab SvT 8/31cd-32ab. These two lines are also quoted in TĀv ad 1/257cd-258ab and in SvTu ad 1/1–4ab. The printed text of the SvT reads *tantram ādhārabhedataḥ* 'the Tantra (was revealed) in accord with the distinct planes' for the reading *tantraṃ samavatārayat*—'tantra was brought down (to earth)'—in both instances. As this is the reading of the great majority of the manuscripts also, I take it to be the correct one.

This verse is also quoted in PTv p. 12. Jayaratha's reading of this verse agrees with the reading there. Following the verse Jayaratha quotes here, the *Svacchandatantra* goes on to describe how the Tantra 'descended' in stages from level to level, as higher beings progressively taught the ones below them at each stage of descent. So, the questions and answers are, as the Tantra says, 'in accord with the distinct planes' (*ādhārabhedataḥ*) on which they reside. So, for example, it was given by Śiva's will to Īśvara, who then told it to Vidyā, who transmitted it to the Lords of Vidyās and so on.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Whatever has been heard from Your mouth in the Yāmalas and other (scriptures), that are the causes of the union of Śiva and Śakti, that is, in the Āgamas by that name including the scriptures called the Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra and Bhairava Yāmalas, was heard previously by the realization of oneness with it. (This oneness is on) the analogy of the reflection and the mirror (such that the reflection) is or is not separate from it inwardly as one and externally as the triad (*trikabheda*) of Nara, Śakti and Śiva. Thus, it has been heard previously in this way to be both common and particular.

Even now my doubt has not ceased. The meaning is that because my nature is Bhairavī, by condensing down into the nature of Māyāśakti and the like, my name is proclaimed to be Bhairavī because I am one with (Māyā's) nature. My doubt concerning her has not ceased (am I the Goddess or am I Māyā?). The sense is that an understanding of my oneness with you has not arisen.

(The universe) pours forth as fixed (and projected) onto the screen of its own nature and so (Bhairavī) sustains all things, that is, because she flashes forth everywhere as all things or else wanes away. She does what is good and beneficial because she bestows freedom from fear to those who are frightened by transmigratory existence. Or else she is said to be Bhairavī. The meaning (of her name) is taught by way of its etymology also because she shines forth radiantly on the plane of the heart of those who cry out with the cry generated by the fear, which is the fright of transmigratory existence.[17]

All this teaching, which consists (of a series of) questions and answers, serves to establish the essential nature of the Couple (*yāmala*), that is, the dynamic union of Bhairava and Bhairavī which is their oneness (*sāmarasya*). It has been taught extensively in the *Tantrāloka* and the *Parātriṃśikā* etc. I am not going to discuss it at length here for that would entail the undesired consequence of stealing secrets (taught there).

We will continue with the main point. The sense is that (Bhairava) explains the true nature (*rūpa*) of Anuttara. Is it the Assembly of Sounds, that is, the *Śabdabrahman*? (As is said further ahead): 'He attains the Supreme Brahman who is deeply merged in the Brahman that is sound (*śabdabrahman*).'[18] Or is

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[17] It is known by the etymology of her name, like that of Bhairava, that Bhairavī causes fettered souls to cry out—*rava*—in fear—*bhī*.

[18] VBh 38ab.

it the 'I' (of the deity's consciousness) as the sounds beginning with A and ending with KṢ, that is, as the Self which is AKṢA? Or else is it present in the reality of consciousness, that is, in Bhairava's nature (*rūpa*) consisting of the Five Tasks (of creation, maintenance, withdrawal, obscuration and grace), which is full (and complete) subjectivity (*pūrṇāhaṃbhāva*) the characteristic of which is Being, Consciousness and Bliss. (In other words, is it) Bhairava who is the Nine Principles (*tattva*), namely, the nine energies, Vāmā and the rest?[19]

Or (is that inner nature), the reality which is divided into the categories of the Three Headed (Bhairava), namely, (the Trika triad of) Nara, Śakti and Śiva and which is, for example, the activity of the object, the means of knowledge and the subject (respectively). Or is it the activity of the three powers of will (knowledge and action)? Or the Sound and the Point that are the energies of knowledge and action as word and meaning, the nature of which is Śiva and Śakti? Or is it the activity consisting of the Half Moon and the Obstructress that (are two of) the limbs of (the phases of) OṂ (*praṇava*)? Or is it the inscrutable reality that flashes forth in three and a half coils in the form of Kuṇḍalinī present in the *cakra*s (in the subtle body) beginning with the one with six petals?

Or is it the radiant effulgence of 'I' (consciousness) that is mounted on the cycle (of the phonemes) (*cakra*) beginning with A and ending with KṢ? Or is it the Unstruck Sound (*anacka*) of (the consonants) beginning with K and ending with KṢ, that is, K, Kh, G, Gh, Ṅ etc., devoid of the sixteen vowels beginning with A? Or is it the form (of Mantra) that possesses vowels and consonants in this way (as, for example,) OṂ NAMAḤ ŚRĪVIDYĀPĀDUKĀBHYAḤ? Or is it the undifferentiated form (of Mantra) that is not uttered, (such as) A U M N A MAḤ Ś R Ī V I D Y Ā P Ā D U K Ā BH YAḤ. **'Tell me all that.'**

Or is it Supreme (Parā) Speech? Or the Lower (Aparā) Speech or the Middling Speech (Parāparā)? Parā is just the power of freedom. That same (power) desirous of emitting succession is Aparā. When that same (power) is in the form of succession it is called Parāparā. And so it is (that we read) in the *Tantrāloka*:

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[19] The nine energies are the goddesses Vāmā, Jyeṣṭhā, Raudrī, Kālī, Kalavikaraṇī Balavikaraṇī, Balapramathanī, Bhūtadamanī and Manonmanī. These are the feminine counterparts of nine Rudras invoked in Vāmadeva's Vedic mantra. This, along with Sadayojāta (west), Aghora (south), Tatpuruṣa (east) and Īśāna (upper) is one of the five faces of Sadāśiva.

'May that same triad of Goddesses—who are the glorious power of the All-pervading Lord (*vibhu*) as: 1) the power which is (His) freedom; 2) the intent to emit the succession (*krama*) (of manifestation); and 3) the succession (*krama*) itself—inwardly reveal my own (unsurpassable) Anuttara nature (*svabhāva*).'[20]

Or else if in this way, because of the oneness of the essential nature of Aparā and Parāparā, that would be so in the case of Parā also, its supremity (*paratva*) would be contradicted. If the difference (*bheda*) between the two kinds (*bheda*), Parā and Parāparā is (considered to be) logically admissible

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[20] TĀ 1/5. Jayaratha equates these three differently. According to him, these powers correspond to the Trika principle of Śiva (= Parā), Śakti (= Parāparā) and Nara (= Aparā). They are: 1) Śiva's freedom which is oneness, 2) the will to emit the process of manifestation, which is unity-in-difference and 3) the world process itself which is duality. Abhinava invokes the three goddesses so that they may abide within him and reveal his own true unsurpassable nature—Anuttara—which is the pure Light of Śiva consciousness. Lord Śiva's sovereignty is His freedom (*svātantrya*) manifest as these three in this way. Anuttara remains eternally manifest even as these distinct categories of existence. This is because it is all of them at each level of their emergent existence as their power to be such as they are.

Śakti is often equated with Śiva's sovereignty. It is like the regal power a king possesses by virtue of which he is a king. It is the authority he exerts over his subjects who depend on him. It is also the Self of all things and as such is Abhinava's own Self. Abhinava begins his commentary (*vivaraṇa*) on the *Parātriṃśikā* (also called *Parātrīśikā*), with the same verse with which he begins the *Tantrāloka*, written after it. There, after the first verse, analogously, he praises the Goddess Parā, as Anuttarā—the Goddess Absolute, who manifests the Trika triad of Nara (Man), Śakti and Śiva:

> 'I praise the Goddess Who, one, is my own consciousness, within whom this universe is made manifest, shining as (if) external within emission and, once the disturbance (of outer manifestation) is over, in the state of the (Goddess) Absolute (*Anuttarā*).
>
> I praise Parā the (Supreme Goddess) Absolute (*anuttarā*) Who, a light unto Herself (*nijābhāsā*), is the wonder of the intuitive imagination (*pratibhā-camatkṛti*). May She, once placed in the Heart (of my supreme consciousness), make manifest the triad (*trika*) of Man, Śakti and Śiva.'

Concerning Anuttarā as the intuitive imagination in cosmic terms, see TĀ 3/65ab-65cd (3/65cd-66ab).

because (in that case) there is an essential oneness of nature (*abheda-svabhāva*), the supremity (*paratva*) of Parā's essential nature would be contradicted. The sense is that in the same way, the differentiated (*sakala*) (aspect) of the essential nature Parā and Parāparā has fallen to the level of the mass of objectivity and contradict (one another) within Parā. This is not admissible here in Parā's case because non-duality is established to be non-dual (and undivided).

Is that supreme state, undifferentiated or differentiated? (It is) not divided as (the four castes, that is,) as Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya and Śūdra, nor (is it divided) by differences in body etc., nor by the formation of many bodies of gods, men, and animals etc.

Thus, in this way by contemplating speech, body and mind as one, grace me, that is, give (me your) gracious look. The sense is that one should take up whatever is essentially the perceiver by contemplating the 'I' which is the essential nature of the subject. Or (one may do that) by abandoning the object by renouncing (any) intent on (anything) other (than the perceiver) by making contact with (only that) one polarity once given up everything (in the course of perception) contemplating: 'what is this?'

Tell (me) the teaching when reaching the plane of duality (such that) there is a doubt in my heart—What is this? What is this? What is that? What is that? Or is it otherwise? Reveal to me the one reality of the perceiver who is the self-luminous 'I' (consciousness) so that the ascertainment (may arise that) 'all this' is my own nature because (it all) rests within my own nature as 'I am' (all this) by virtue of the attainment of oneness (that occurs) as a consequence (of the realization) that, like a reflection in a mirror, all this is not separate (from the consciousness) within oneself. 'Grace' (*prasāda*) is the attainment (*āsādana*) (that is bestowed) most excellently (*prakarṣeṇa*). The sense is that (Bhairava) expounds the way in which oneness within one's own nature is achieved by removing duality and attaining non-duality.

Established in the role of the one who ascertains the (meaning of) scripture, which has as its object reality and is associated with Bhairavī's nature, that is, consciousness which is one with one's own Self, he is himself the Supreme Lord who is the teacher of the teachings (*siddhānta*).

श्रीभैरव उवाच

साधु साधु त्वया पृष्टं तन्त्रसारमिदं प्रिये ॥ ७ ॥
गूहनीयतमं भद्रे तथापि कथयामि ते ।

śrībhairava uvāca:

sādhu sādhu tvayā pṛṣṭaṃ tantrasāram idaṃ priye || 7 ||
gūhanīyatamaṃ bhadre tathāpi kathayāmi te |

The venerable Bhairava said:

Well done! Well done! O dear one, you have asked about this, (the very) essence of the Tantras. O virtuous one! this (knowledge) should be kept most secret, but even so I will tell it to you. (7cd-8ab)

Word-for-word meaning: *sādhu sādhu* Well done! Well done! *priye* O dear one, *tvayā pṛṣṭaṃ* you have asked *idaṃ* about this, *tantrasāram* (the very) essence of the Tantras. *bhadre* O virtuous one! *gūhanīyatamaṃ* this (knowledge) should be kept most secret, *tathāpi* but even so *kathayāmi te* I will tell it to you.

Kṣemarāja

Having said 'well done! well done!' he praises (the goddess) respectfully applying his own intelligence. 'O dear one!' You who are intent on the experience of the satisfaction of supreme bliss and so 'O virtuous one', illustrious one, what you have asked is the subject matter (*vastu*) which is the essence of all the scriptures and, because it is extremely secret, 'should be kept most secret'. Even so, 'I will tell it to you' who are fit (to know it) because you are intent on entering the most excellent plane. Know this to be so.

There (in that regard), that which is to be adopted, grows in the heart heralded by the destruction of what is to be abandoned

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The meaning there (with regard) to the name Bhairava was previously established in the (course of) the aforestated teaching concerning the name 'Bhairavī' because (Bhairavī's) nature does not differ from that (of Bhairava). Again, Bhairava is He who causes one to cry in fear (as his name is derived from the word) '*bhīma*' (which means fierce) because of the fear (he induces). The sense is that (this is so) because (he) flashes forth as 'I' (of subjectivity) and is destroyed as the 'thisness' of His condensed (objectivized aspect) that

(assumes specific forms) like snow (that is 'condensed' water) or clarified butter (that is condensed butter). (Bhairava) 'said' means that He responds to the energy of (the goddess of) consciousness who is one with Him, having placed (Her) facing Himself.

यत्किंचित्सकलं रूपं भैरवस्य प्रकीर्तितम् ॥ ८ ॥
तदसारतया देवि विज्ञेयं शक्रजालवत् ॥
मायास्वप्नोपमं चैव गन्धर्वनगरभ्रमम् ॥ ९ ॥

yat kiṃcit sakalaṃ rūpaṃ bhairavasya prakīrtitam || 8 ||
tad asāratayā devi vijñeyaṃ śakrajālavat |
māyāsvapnopamaṃ caiva gandharvanagarabhramam || 9 ||

O Goddess, whatever is said to be Bhairava's differentiated (*sakala*) (iconic) form, it has no essence and so should be known (to be deceptive) like Indra's (magic) net and like the dream of Māyā, the mistaken belief in the (non-existent) city of Gandharvas (in the sky). (8cd-9)

Word-for-word meaning: *devi* O Goddess *yat kiṃcit* whatever *prakīrtitam* is said to be *bhairavasya* Bhairava's *sakalaṃ* differentiated *rūpaṃ* (iconic) form *tad* it *asāratayā* has no essence *vijñeyaṃ* (and so should be) known (to be deceptive) *śakrajālavat* like Indra's (magic) net, *māyāsvapnopamaṃ* the dream of Māyā *caiva gandharvanagarabhramam* and the mistaken belief in the (non-existent) city of Gandharvas (in the sky).

ध्यानार्थं भ्रान्तबुद्धीनां क्रियाडम्बरवर्तिनाम् ।
केवलं वर्णितं पुंसां विकल्पनिहतात्मनाम् ॥ १० ॥

dhyānārthaṃ bhrāntabuddhīnāṃ kriyāḍambaravartinām |
kevalaṃ varṇitaṃ puṃsāṃ vikalpanihatātmanām || 10 ||

(Some form of Bhairava) is described only so that people engaged in the turmoil of ritual, whose minds are confused and are overwhelmed by (the dichotomies of) thought, (may) meditate (on Him). (10)

Word-for-word meaning: *varṇitaṃ* (Some form of Bhairava) is described *kevalaṃ* only so that *puṃsāṃ* people *kriyāḍambaravartinām* engaged in the turmoil of ritual, *bhrāntabuddhīnāṃ* whose minds are confused and are *vikalpanihatātmanām* overwhelmed by (the dichotomies of) thought, *dhyānārthaṃ* (may) meditate (on Him).

Kṣemarāja: Thus, one should now generate this degree of their competence. This is not said to those who wish to live in (one or other of the) reality levels, because:

तत्त्वतो न नवात्मासौ शब्दराशिर्न भैरवः ।
न चासौ त्रिशिरा देवो न च शक्तित्रयात्मकः ॥ ११ ॥

tattvato na navātmāsau śabdarāśirna bhairavaḥ |
na cāsau triśirā devo na ca śaktitrayātmakaḥ || 11 ||

In reality, Bhairava is neither (ninefold as) Navātman, nor (is he) (Śabdarāśibhairava) the aggregate of (phonemic) sounds; and nor is he (Triśirobhairava) the three-headed God nor the three energies (Parā, Parāparā and Aparā). (11)

Word-for-word meaning: *tattvato* In reality, *bhairavaḥ* Bhairava *na* is neither *navātmāsau* (ninefold as) Navātman *na* nor (is he) *śabdarāśir* (Śabdarāśibhairava) the aggregate of (phonemic) sounds *na cāsau* and nor (is he) *triśirā* the (Triśirobhairava) the three-headed *devo* God *na ca* nor *śaktitrayātmakaḥ* the three energies (Parā, Parāparā and Aparā).

नादबिन्दुमयो वापि न चन्द्रार्धनिरोधिकाः ।
न चक्रक्रमसंभिन्नो न च शक्तिस्वरूपकः ॥ १२ ॥

nādabindumayo vāpi na candrārdhanirodhikāḥ |
na cakrakramasaṃbhinno na ca śaktisvarūpakaḥ || 12 ||

He is neither Sound (*nāda*) nor the Point (*bindu*), not the Half Moon (nor) the Obstructress. He is not associated with the sequence of the cycle (of letters), nor is Śakti His nature. (12)

Word-for-word meaning: *nādabindumayo vāpi* (He is neither) Sound nor the Point *na* not *candrārdhanirodhikāḥ* the Half Moon (nor) the Obstructress *na* (He is) not *cakrakramasaṃbhinno* associated with the sequence of the cycle (of letters) *na ca* nor is *śaktisvarūpakaḥ* Śakti His nature.

Kṣemarāja

Although Bhairava, who is one's own Self, is in reality indescribable, by entering into some subtle notion (of Himself) in accord with the teaching expounded in the Pratyabhijñā (it is said):

(He who is never) devoid of (His) freedom, having fashioned himself freely by means of the notions of His own non-dual Self as 'Lord' and 'Sovereign', He acts in the world.[21] Having made his subject, the desire to instruct concerning the essential nature of the eight about which he has inquired, namely Navātman, Śabdarāśi and the rest, what is the purpose of mentioning each one (again variously) in this way and that? He severs this doubt (by saying):

अप्रबुद्धमतीनां हि एता बालविभीषिकाः ।
मातृमोदकवत्सर्वं प्रवृत्त्यर्थमुदाहृतम् ॥ १३ ॥

aprabuddhamatīnāṃ hi etā bālavibhīṣikāḥ |
mātṛmodakavat sarvaṃ pravṛttyartham udāhṛtam || 13 ||

These (notions of His nature) are certainly (only) for those whose intellect has not awakened; (they serve to dispel their doubts that are like) things that frighten children. All (this) is said to impel (them) to act (for their own advancement) like a sweet a mother (offers a child). (13)

Word-for-word meaning: *etā* these (notions of His nature) *hi* are certainly *aprabuddhamatīnāṃ* (only) for those whose intellect has not awakened *bālavibhīṣikāḥ* (they serve to dispel their doubts that are like) things that frighten children. *sarvaṃ* All (this) *udāhṛtam* is said *pravṛttyartham* to impel (them) to act (for their own advancement) *mātṛmodakavat* like a sweet a mother (offers a child).

Kṣemarāja

The reference to Navātman and the rest is made for those whose intellect has not been purified to an excellent degree by an intense descent of the power of grace (and so) is intent to just a certain degree on spiritual practice. (It is done) in order to quell (their) attachment at some time or other, like that which frightens children. Just as the attachment children have for things that do not exist is removed by false fears, similarly, the attachment and aversion of those who are intent on the pursuit of worldly (*sāṃsārika*) karma (is removed) by these kinds of frightening things. However, just as a mother impels a child to behave well by giving (him) a sweet, similarly a person is

[21] *svātantryāmuktam ātmānaṁ svātantryād advayātmanaḥ |*
prabhurīśādisaṁklpair nirmāya vyavahārayet || ĪP 1/5/16.

impelled to worship God by showing him that it is a means that serves to accomplish his goal so that (he may) gradually attain Parabhairava.

If that is Bhairava's nature with form (*sakala*), then pray describe the one without form so that the doubt concerning (the nature of Bhairava's) supreme power (*parāśakti*) may (thereby) be dispelled.

दिक्कालकलनोन्मुक्ता देशोद्देशाविशेषिणी ।
व्यपदेष्टुमशंक्यासावकथ्या परमार्थतः ॥ १४ ॥
अन्तः स्वानुभवानन्दा विकल्पोन्मुक्तगोचरा ।
यावस्था भरिताकारा भैरवी भैरवात्मनः ॥ १५ ॥
तद्वपुस्तत्त्वतो ज्ञेयं विमलं विश्वपूरणम् ।

dikkālakalanonmuktā deśoddeśāviśeṣiṇī |
vyapadeṣṭum aśakyāsāv akathyā paramārthataḥ || 14 ||
antaḥsvānubhavānandā vikalponmuktagocarā |
yāvasthā bharitākārā bhairavī bhairavātmanaḥ || 15 ||
tadvapus tattvato jñeyaṃ vimalaṃ viśvapūraṇam |

Free of the diversification of space and time, unspecified (by any) designation of place, (the goddess) cannot be described. (Indeed) she is ultimately inexpressible. Bhairavī is the bliss of one's own inner (*antar*) experience of oneself. (Her) state is completely free of (all) conceptions (and is the) state of Bhairava's own nature which is (her) form that is (absolutely) full (and perfect).[22] One should know that body as it truly is (not in any physical form but as) immaculate and replenishing all things. (14–16ab)

Word-for-word meaning: *dikkālakalanonmuktā* Free of the diversification of space and time *deśoddeśāviśeṣiṇī* unspecified (by any) designation of place *aśakyāsāv vyapadeṣṭum* (the goddess) cannot be described *paramārthataḥ* (she is) ultimately *akathyā* inexpressible *Bhairavī* Bhairavī *antaḥsvānubhavānandā* is the bliss of one's own inner (*antar*) experience of oneself.

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[22] Lines 15–16ab are quoted in ŚSūvi ad 3/38 (*tripadādyanuprāṇanam*). Kṣemarāja links these lines to verses 69–73 below. Abhinava refers to his father (in TĀ 1/1) as one whose 'body is full' (*bharitatanuḥ*) i.e., containing all things and filling them. This expression applies most specifically to Bhairava which is suggested in the didactic etymology (*nirvacana*) we find commonly in these sources and the Tantras. Cf. PTv (p. 266) 'Bhairava's nature is His form which is full' (*bhairavātma bharitākāram*).

vikalponmuktagocarā (Her) state is completely free of (all) conceptions *yāvasthā* (and is the) state of *bhairavātmanaḥ* Bhairava's own nature *bharitākārā* which is (her) form that is (absolutely) full (and perfect).[23] *jñeyaṃ* One should know *tadvapus* that body *tattvato* as it truly is (not in any physical form but as) *vimalaṃ* immaculate and *viśvapūraṇam* replenishing all things.

Kṣemarāja

'Inner' (means) within complete subjectivity (*pūrṇāhantā*). 'One's own experience' means one's own light (of consciousness) which is bliss itself (*eva*). (She is Bhairavī) whose nature is such. Thus, because (She has no physical, iconic) form (*mūrti*), she is devoid of the differentiation of 'in front' and 'behind' of space, (or) 'previous' and 'subsequent' of time. She is such that she possesses no specifying feature (*viśeṣa*) in a perceptible form that can be indicated objectively as a location that is said to be 'distant' or 'near' etc. Thus, she cannot be taught and is not in the domain of the middle speech (of thought).

And so, because she is not in the domain of the intention to name (particular things), she cannot be talked about with (common) corporal speech. She is 'indescribable' 'in reality', that is, in (her) true form. However, She can be said to be conceived to be close or distant and, for the aforestated reason, she can be taught and described. She is 'the state' of the possessor of (that) state who is me, whose nature is Bhairava. (That) state is my power that is not separate from me. (Her) form, that is, essential nature, is 'full' and consists of the wonder that is one with the entire universe. (Her nature is), in reality, pure and not covered (and obscured) by the universe (although it is) made manifest on the screen of her own (nature). (Her) own nature, which should be known (and is the object of knowledge) is (her) body that fills the universe, that is, makes everything manifest. It certainly has no other form or the like.

Having contemplated the supreme nature as it truly is in this way, (he refers to) the turmoil of ritual, (the nature of which) serves to establish that that is so.

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[23] Abhinava refers to his father (in TĀ 1/1) as one whose 'body is full' (*bharitatanuḥ*) i.e., containing all things and filling them. This expression applies most specifically to Bhairava which is suggested in the didactic etymology (*nirvacana*) we find commonly in these sources and the Tantras. Cf. PTv (p. 266) 'Bhairava's nature is His form which is full (and perfect)' (*bhairavātma bharitākāram*).

Discussion

Kṣemarāja quotes these verses in his commentary on the *Śivasūtra* that declares 'That which is preceded by the three states vitalizes them.' (*tripadādyanuprāṇanam*) (ŚSū 3/38) Bhāskara explains that 'that which is preceded by the three states is the Fourth (state of pure consciousness) which is preceded by the states of waking (dreaming and deep sleep) and is said to be the fullness (of consciousness that permeates all three) simultaneously. (All) existing things are rightly vitalized by it in the sense that it infuses its own inherent power (into them).'

In his commentary, Kṣemarāja first quotes these verses (i.e. VBh 14–15) and then elaborates on them by quoting verses 69–71 (68–70) as a means of approaching and experiencing the goddess. Clearly, he understands the Goddess here to be embodied in the partner in the meditations that are practiced in the course of lovemaking or whenever the yogi experiences intensely blissful emotions of comparable intensity. For the convenience of the reader, these meditations are reproduced here.

'The bliss (*sukha*) that culminates (during orgasm) with penetration into power (*śakti*) well aroused by (sexual) union with a *śakti* is that of the reality of the Brahman which is said to be one's own (inherent) bliss. O goddess, even in the absence of a *śakti* there is a flood of bliss by filling the memory with the joy (of sex, with a) woman, had by licking, churning, squeezing and the like. When there is occasion for great bliss (such as when making love), or when seeing a (dear) relative (or friend) after a long time, having meditated on the bliss that arises (just then) the mind of one that is that (bliss) dissolves into it.' (69–71) (68–70)

एवंविधे परे तत्त्वे कः पूज्यः कश्च तृप्यति ॥ १६ ॥

evaṃvidhe pare tattve kaḥ pūjyaḥ kaśca tṛpyati || 16 ||

What (can be) the object of worship and who is satisfied (thereby) within such a supreme (absolute) reality? (16cd)

Word-for-word meaning: *kaḥ* what *pūjyaḥ* (can be) the object of worship *kaś ca* and who *tṛpyati* is satisfied (thereby) *evaṃvidhe* within such a *pare* supreme (absolute) *tattve* reality.

(This is) because worship, the object of worship, the worshipper and the one who offers libation and the like are in reality a single dense (uninterrupted) consciousness and bliss.

He says (the following) in order to quell the doubt in this way concerning (the nature of) the Goddess Parā.

एवंविधा भैरवस्य यावस्था परिगीयते ।
सा परा पररूपेण परादेवी प्रकीर्तिता ॥ १७ ॥

evaṃvidhā bhairavasya yāvasthā parigīyate |
sā parā pararūpeṇa parādevī prakīrtitā || 17 ||

That state, which is such, is lauded (in the scriptures) as that of Bhairava. It is supreme. As its nature is supreme (*para*), it is called the Goddess Parā. (17)

Word-for-word meaning: *yāvasthā* that state *evaṃvidhā* which is such *parigīyate* is lauded *bhairavasya sā* (as) that *bhairavasya* of Bhairava. *parā* It (is) supreme. *pararūpeṇa* As its nature is supreme (*para*) *prakīrtitā* (it is) called *parādevī* the Goddess Parā.

Kṣemarāja

(That state) 'is lauded'. It is lauded (*gīyate*) in order to distinguish (that state, which is the Goddess, from the God who possesses it) (*paricchedārtha*). The supreme (reality) operates (in the world) as the relative distinction (between things). In actual fact, that (state) is one with Bhairava and so is itself, by virtue of (its) supreme nature, the supreme (*parā*), that is, the most excellent (state) and being so is the Goddess Parā ('Supreme'). The remaining (implicit) sense is (that she is) not (such) in name only with no substance.

Surely, Bhairava's state is his essential nature itself. It is not created by a loud clatter (of words) or the like (*kolādi*). (Rather), for the aforestated reason, a certain (inscrutable) level of existence (*daśā*) does exist. (The question now arises) is that Bhairava himself united with Bhairavī? (In the following verse) he says that yes, it is emphatically admitted (to be so).

शक्तिशक्तिमतोर्यद्वत् अभेदः सर्वदा स्थितः ।
अतस्तद्धर्मधर्मित्वात् परा शक्तिः परात्मनः ॥ १८ ॥

śaktiśaktimator yadvat abhedaḥ sarvadā sthitaḥ |
tathā[24] *taddharmadharmitvāt parā śaktiḥ parātmanaḥ* || 18 ||

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[24] Read *tathā* for *atas*.

Just as there is a constant state of oneness between Śakti and its possessor, in the same way the power of the Supreme Self (*parātman*) is the Supreme (goddess) because She possesses His same (supreme) nature. (18)

Word-for-word meaning: *yadvat* Just as *sarvadā sthitaḥ* there is a constant state of *abhedaḥ* oneness between *śaktiśaktimator* Śakti and its possessor *tathā* in the same way *śaktiḥ* the power *parātmanaḥ* of the supreme Self is *parā* the Supreme (goddess) *taddharmadharmitvāt* because She possesses His same (supreme) nature.

Kṣemarāja

'Power' (*śakti*) is ability (*śakana*), that is, the capacity (to know and act) which is the essential nature of Bhairava who (by virtue of that power) is capable of creating the universe. He, the possessor of power, possesses as His (inherent) nature the power associated with him such as his omniscience, universal agency, omniformity and the like. He (now goes on to) refute (the view to the contrary) by means of an example (that serves as his) main (argument).

न वह्नेर्दाहिका शक्तिः व्यतिरिक्ता विभाव्यते ।
केवलं ज्ञानसत्तायां प्रारम्भोऽयं प्रवेशने ॥ १९ ॥

na vahner dāhikā śaktiḥ vyatiriktā vibhāvyate |
kevalaṃ jñānasattāyāṃ prārambho'yaṃ praveśane || 19 ||

The power to burn is not perceived to be different from fire when (there is) only (just) the perception (of fire). When entering into the (essential) being of insight (into their true nature), this (distinction between Śiva and His power) is only the beginning. (19)

Word-for-word meaning: *dāhikā śaktiḥ* the power to burn *na* is not *vibhāvyate* perceived to be *vyatiriktā* different *vahner* from fire *praveśane* when entering into *jñānasattāyāṃ* the (essential) being of insight (into their true nature) *ayaṃ* this (distinction between Śiva and His power) *kevalaṃ* is only *prārambho* the beginning. (19)

Kṣemarāja

One who desires to know the nature of fire does not perceive it when (just) perceiving it even (after) having reflected upon (what he has seen). (Just an)

introduction into the knowledge (of its nature as) fire (takes place) there (at the moment of perception). This is the beginning of (an understanding of) the nature of fire which is (essentially) the power (it possesses) to burn which is specified by the perception (that fire) burns (*dāha*). This is because it is by means of that (perception of the fire's capacity to burn) that he understands the nature of the possessor of that power which consists of countless powers, including the power to cook and the rest. It is said in the Pratyabhijñā that the essential nature of an entity is the power (*śakti*) (it possesses to give rise to its specific effects). Diversity is projected onto (that power) due the diversity of the fruits (of its activity). He says (the following) in order to associate the object exemplified (with the example).

शक्त्यवस्थाप्रविष्टस्य निर्विभागेन भावना ।
तदासौ शिवरूपी स्यात् शैवी मुखमिहोच्यते ॥ २० ॥

śaktyavasthāpraviṣṭasya nirvibhāgena bhāvanā |
tadāsau śivarūpī syāt śaivī mukham ihocyate || 20 ||

The contemplation (*bhāvanā*) of one who has entered (the supreme) Śakti's state is (one with Śiva) undivided. Then he is Śiva. It is said here that Śiva's power (*śaivī*) is the means (*mukha*)[25] (lit. 'mouth' to attain Him). (20)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhāvanā* the contemplation *śaktyavasthāpraviṣṭasya* of one who has entered (the supreme) Śakti's state *nirvibhāgena* is (one with Śiva) undivided *tadāsau* then he is *śivarūpī syāt* Śiva *śaivī* Śiva's power *ihocyate* is said here (in the scriptures to be His) *mukham* mouth.

Kṣemarāja

If the individual soul, who is to be instructed, penetrates and enters into the state which is the Supreme Power (*parāśakti*) by the means that will be taught, then his contemplation (*bhāvanā*) is undivided, because Power is not different

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[25] The word *'mukha'* can variously mean, according to the context, 'mouth', 'face', 'channel' or 'means'. As the 'mouth' it is that through which Śiva teaches the liberating knowledge of the scriptures, and so, as Śakti, it is the foundation of every means to enter and become one with Him. It is also the channel through which His power in multiple forms flows out of him and operates in the sphere of manifestation. Jayaratha quotes the last quarter of this verse in all these senses. Thus, it can be one of Śiva's five faces that utters the scriptures (TĀv ad 1/1). It is the channel

from Śiva. Then he has acquired the strength of Śakti and his nature is Śiva which is the most extolled (of all) for this is Śiva's power that here in the scriptures is called 'the mouth' which is the door, that is, the means of entry. With two clear examples, he makes that (teaching) convincing.

Discussion

Jayaratha quotes VBh 20d in TĀv ad 1/1, 1/73 (74), 3/172 (171c d-172ab), 3/194 (3/193cd-194ab), 6/252ab (251cd) and 29/273cd-274ab. Kṣemarāja finds several occasions to quote this important dictum, namely that Śakti is the means (*śaivīmukha*) to realize Śiva. Kṣemarāja is commenting on passage in the *Svacchandatantra* in which seven levels of Voidness are described.[26] The seventh is the Void of the energy of the Transmental (*unmanīśakti*) that connects directly to Śiva, the Supreme Reality (*paramatattva*) and so is the most direct means to His attainment. This then is where we begin:

'Having abandoned the six Voids, merge into the seventh one.' (SvT 4/291cd)

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through which Śiva bestows grace and the power comes forth from him who thus manifests as all things (TĀv ad 3/172) (171cd-172ab)).

It is also the oral tradition (*mukhāgama*) (TĀv ad 6/252ab (251cd)). Jayaratha explains what is meant by the oral tradition by an etymological analysis of the word for it, namely, *mukhāgama*, which literally means 'what has come from the mouth'. The word for 'mouth' or 'face'—*mukha*—also denotes a 'means'. '*Āgama*', literally means 'what has come' i.e., the tradition which is the word that has come from the teacher's mouth beginning with that of the Deity. It is also the channel from consciousness to the senses and the breath (ibid. ad 29/273cd-274ab) as well as the means to realization (ibid. ad 1/73 (74) and ad 3/194 (193cd-194ab)). In his commentary on TĀ 1/73 he Jayaratha says: 'manifestation is (only) logically possible due to (the existence of) the difference between both Śiva and (His) power that is created (*sṛṣṭena bhedena*) in this way. Śiva is 'devoid of parts' as His one nature is solely the Light (of consciousness). But even so, 'whatever channel', that is, (whichever) one amongst the partial (aspects of Śiva's manifestations) as the world-orders and the rest, He manifests in creative meditation (*bhāvanā*) etc., is a channel (*mukha*) which, as a means to attain Śiva, is 'a power'. (This view is) in accord with (the teaching of the *Vijñānabhairava*) that states: 'It is said here that Śiva's power (*śaivī*) is the means (and channel) (*mukha*) (to attain Him).'

[26] See Dyczkowski 2004: 54–58 for a brief exposition of these seven. Also L. Silburn 'Les sept vacuités d'après le Śivaisme du Cachemire.' In 1969, *Le Vide, Expérience spirituelle en Occident et en Orient*, Hermès 6, Paris, pp. 213–221.

The reason for this is because 'that Void is supremely subtle, devoid of all states (and limiting conditions).' (The sense of the expression) 'supremely subtle' has been explained previously. The Transmental possesses 'Śiva's power (*śaivī*) which is said here to be the means (*mukha*) (to attain Him).'(VBh 20cd)

In accord with this teaching, it is the state of one who wishes to enter the supreme plane with the desire to be fit (to do so) because it is the means to enter the Supreme Principle. Having established this, (it is said that nonetheless) it is 'devoid of all states', that is, the supreme principle is the one nature of the three states. If this is so, how is it the Void? (With this question in mind the Tantra goes on to) say:

'What is not void is said to be the Void. The Void is said to be non-existence. Non-existence is said to be where phenomenally existing things are destroyed.'

'He reveals the path to liberation that is very hard to penetrate within the Egg of Brahmā. He is worshipped as prescribed because it is in accord with the visualization (taught in the scripture) by Śiva's will.'[27]

Kṣemarāja comments: 'Practicing in accord with the visualization, worshipping as prescribed, that is, with rites of adoration, the repetition of Mantra and the like, it is possible for yogis to penetrate the path to liberation that is hard to penetrate in the Egg of Brahmā. (Rudra) 'reveals' (the path), that is, frees it from obscuring coverings. He prepares it by splitting apart the shell of the Egg of Brahmā, he certainly does not block it.

Again, Lord Rudra, who is the (perpetual) expansion (*sphāra*) of supreme consciousness, fashions the path to liberation within the Egg of Brahma that is called the Knot of the Heart and is the ignorance of one's own nature that is present where the heart is located in the body. (He does this) by applying the stick of the vital breath that has been made clearly apparent as present within His own (inherent) power (*svaśakti*).

'The Knot of ignorance which is said to be 'the Knot within the Heart' controls the lower and upper (movement of the breath.' By quelling it, (Rudra) makes the plane of Śakti that is on the Middle Path clearly apparent as the cause of the attainment of Śivahood. (Concerning this path) according to the teachings (of the *Vijñānabhairava*) 'it is said here that Śiva's power (*śaivī*) is the means (*mukha*) (to attain Him).' (VBh 20cd)

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[27] SvT 4/292cd-293ab and 10/614. See Dyczkowski 2004: 57.

This is the (true) inner meaning (*artha*). The pervasive extant of the Egg of Brahmā should not be explained to be (solely) within the Cavity of Brahmā (as some do). (If) that were to be so the expanse of the coverings beginning with (the principle) of Water would not be within the body.

'The channels of the vital breath (*nāḍī*) are the foundation of Sound. The imperishable (syllable OṀ) (*akṣara*), whose resonance is unmanifest, is merged into the Cavity of Brahmā by way of the channel (of the vital breath) having come forth by means of the power below until (it reaches) the upper (summit) of the Egg of Brahmā. Sustained by Śiva's power, it resounds within all living beings'.[28]

And so, in this way, due to the destruction of the pervasion of duality, the Knot of Being[29] has no object. As the master has written in the venerable *Spanda*:

'Once entered that state which (the yogi) takes as his support and firmly resolves that: 'I will surely do whatever he says', both the Sun (of exhalation) and the Moon (of inhalation) set, following the ascending way, into the channel of *suṣumnā*, once abandoned the sphere of the universe. Then in that great sky, when the Sun and Moon dissolve away, the dull minded (yogi is cast down) into a state like that of deep sleep, the awakened however, remains lucid.'[30]

'Brahmāṇī, the supreme power who is present on the path to liberation is deployed (there) having blocked the door to the path to liberation. And (yet) sitting next to Brahmā, she also bestows the path to liberation.'[31]

(As can be gathered) from the sense (of these lines, the goddess meant here) is Parā. (She is present) on the path to liberation. (The *Vijñānabhairava* declares) 'It is said here that Śiva's power (*śaivī*) is the means (*mukha*)[32] (to

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[28] SvT 10/1234–1236.

[29] Read *bhāvagrantho* for *bhāvigrantho*.

[30] SpKā 23–25.

[31] SvT 10/1239–1240ab

[32] The word '*mukha*' can variously mean, according to the context, 'mouth', 'face', 'channel' or 'means'. As the 'mouth' it is that through which Śiva teaches the liberating knowledge of the scriptures, and so, as Śakti, it is the foundation of every means to enter and become one with Him. It is also the channel through which His power in multiple forms flows out of him and operates in the sphere of manifestation.

attain Him).' (VBh 20d) Thus, for the ignorant that door to liberation, which is the Path of Śakti, is, by the Lord's will, kept shut. (But) to those who possess (this liberating) knowledge, she bestows the path to liberation. That is how she behaves. Thus, as Brahmāṇī is such, 'O fair lady, having broken through her, one should, O beloved! travel upwards'[33] by the process of uttering the Mantra taught previously.'

यथालोकेन दीपस्य किरणैर्भास्करस्य च ।
ज्ञायते दिग्विभागादि तद्वच्छक्त्या शिवः प्रिये ॥ २१ ॥

yathālokena dīpasya kiraṇair bhāskarasya ca |
jñāyate digvibhāgādi tadvac chaktyā śivaḥ priye || 21 ||

Just as the directions and (their) divisions etc are known by the light of a lamp and the rays of the sun, in the same way, O beloved, Śiva (is known) by (means of His) power (Śakti). (21)

Jayaratha quotes the last quarter of this verse in all these senses. Thus, it can be one of Śiva's five faces that utters the scriptures (TĀv ad 1/1). It is the channel through which Śiva bestows grace and the power comes forth from him who thus manifests as all things (TĀv ad 3/172) (171cd-172ab)). It is also the oral tradition (*mukhāgama*) (TĀv ad 6/252ab (251cd)). Jayaratha explains what is meant by the oral tradition by an etymological analysis of the word for it, namely, *mukhāgama*, which literally means 'what has come from the mouth'. The word for 'mouth' or 'face'—*mukha*—also denotes a 'means'. '*Āgama*', literally means 'what has come' i.e., the tradition which is the word that has come from the teacher's mouth. It is also the channel from consciousness to the senses and the breath (ibid. ad 29/273cd-274ab) as well as the means to realization (ibid. ad 1/73 (74) and ad 3/194 (193cd-194ab)). In his commentary on TĀ 1/73 he says: 'manifestation is (only) logically possible due to (the existence of) the difference between both Śiva and (His) power that is created (*sṛṣṭena bhedena*) in this way. Śiva is 'devoid of parts' as His one nature is solely the Light (of consciousness). But even so, 'whatever channel', that is, (whichever) one amongst the partial (aspects of Śiva's manifestations) as the world-orders and the rest, He manifests in creative meditation (*bhāvanā*) etc., is a channel (*mukha*) which, as a means to attain Śiva, is 'a power'. (This view is) in accord with (the teaching of the *Vijñānabhairava*) that states: 'Śiva's power (*śaivī*) is said here (in the scriptures) to be (His) mouth (*mukha*).' (which is the entrance to the realization of one's own Śiva nature). It is said here that Śiva's power (*śaivī*) is the means (*mukha*) (to attain Him)'.

[33] *SvT* 10/1240cd.

Word-for-word meaning: *yathā* just as *digvibhāgādi* the directions and (their) divisions etc. *jñāyate* are known *ālokena* by the light *dīpasya* of a lamp *ca* and *kiraṇair* by the rays *bhāskarasya* of the sun, *tadvac* in the same way, *priye* O beloved, *śivaḥ* Śiva (is known) *chaktyā* by (means of His) power (Śakti).

Kṣemarāja

Just as the location etc. of the directions and (their) divisions is known by the light of a lamp, that is, (by its) flame, and by the rays of the sun, not by another lamp or the like,[34] similarly, Śiva, who is one's own Self, is known, recognized and penetrated by means of His own power (*śakti*), which is His effulgent radiance (*sphurattā*). This is the meaning.

Now the nature of Parā has been taught, the Goddess said (the following) desiring to know the means to attain her.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The sense is that Bhairava's body should be known to be the 'I' (of supreme subjectivity) which is the repose that is the state which is full (and perfect) Bhairava whose nature is full (of all things). It is the true nature of (consciousness) devoid of thought constructs which is the full (and all encompassing) subjectivity (*pūrṇāhantā*), the nature of which is one with His own (inherent) Light.

Who is in this way the object of worship or who is satisfied (thereby) and is the one who gives (that) satisfaction in this, Bhairava's (ultimate) reality? In this way, Bhairava's supreme state is extolled as being in this form. As these two, power and the possessor of power, are one, so this is said to be the supreme power (*parāśakti*).

There is also an example here (concerning this)—just as the fire's power to burn is not separate (from the fire) so too this power, (called) Parā (is not separate from Bhairava). The sense is that by means (*mukhena*) of that, Bhairava (manifests directly) before one (*sāṃmukhya*). There is, again, an example here (with regard to this teaching). It is taught that just as (something can be) acquired by (catching hold of it) with the mouth, in the same

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34 The lamp or the sun illumines itself even as it illumines space. No second source of light is required to illumine the first one.

way Śiva is (attained) by means of Śakti. And there is (yet) another example. Just as the directions (and their) divisions are known by the light of a lamp or the sun, in the same way Śiva is made manifest by (His) power. Thus (this teaching) is established (to be sound).

Discussion

VBh 21 is quoted in TĀ 1/205ab, TĀv 1/202–204 and TĀv ad 3/105cd-106ab. Jayaratha explains (in TĀv 1/202–204), just before quoting this verse, that Bhairava's rays are unique to Him. 'They are (His divine attributes,) such as (His) oneness, luminosity, and infinity. (They belong) to the Lord, who is the powerholder and the sustaining ground (of all things) where (He and all things) manifest. Power alone is the means to know that.'

Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in his commentary on *Svacchandatantra* 4/337cd. There he says:

'Like the flame of a lamp (does not differ from its light), so too knowledge does not differ from the object of knowledge. Accordingly (the Tantra) declares: 'O lady of sound vows, it is said that knowledge is the characteristic of the essential nature of objectivity.'

Supreme reality is not (secondarily) characterized by knowledge as a student is by the waterpot (he carries). Accordingly (the Tantra) declares: 'an (inherent) characteristic (of an entity) is said to be (an intrinsic) quality (of that entity). A characteristic feature is an (intrinsic) quality (of an entity). It is unique (to that entity as that which) establishes its (specific) nature.'

Thus, 'the (inherent) power of a reality principle (*tattva*) is always (*sarvadā*) (invariably associated with it).'

According to (one) etymology (of the word *sarvadā*) it gives all (*dadāti*) that belongs to Supreme Śiva who is the reality that is to be recognized.' According to this etymology it is called the freedom (of Supreme Śiva) that brings about emission and withdrawal. And it is the characteristic (of an entity) that is the power, that is, energy that is never (*sarvadā*) separate (from the entity it characterizes).' Kṣemarāja then goes on to quote this verse from the *Vijñānabhairava*.

Remarks: Śiva is Śiva because of His power which comprises the many divine and unique characteristics of His nature. Indeed, it is His innermost

nature. Śiva is known by His power. This means what he does as well as what he is and by the grace he bestows on those who are the object of His grace.

श्रीदेवी उवाच

देवदेव त्रिशूलाङ्क कपालकृतभूषण।
दिग्देशकालशून्या च व्यपदेशविवर्जिता ॥ २२ ॥
यावस्था भरिताकारा भैरवस्योपलभ्यते।
कैरुपायैर्मुखं तस्य परादेवी कथं भवेत् ॥ २३ ॥
यथा सम्यगहं वेद्मि तथा मे ब्रूहि भैरव।

śrīdevyuvāca

devadeva triśūlāṅka kapālakṛtabhūṣaṇa |
digdeśakālaśūnyā ca vyapadeśavivarjitā || 22 ||
yāvasthā bharitākārā bhairavasyopalabhyate |
kair upāyair mukhaṃ tasya parā devī kathaṃ bhavet || 23 ||
yathā samyag ahaṃ vedmi tathā me brūhi bhairava |

O God of the gods, whose emblem is the trident and who has made skulls (his) ornament, what are the (various) means by which the supreme state that is free from (any sense of) direction, space and time and that cannot be described, and is Bhairava's state of plenitude (*bharitākārā*), be realized? How can the Supreme Goddess (*parā devī*) be his mouth (through which to enter into him)? O Bhairava, pray tell me (this), so that I may know it properly. (22–24ab)

Word-for-word meaning: *devadeva* O God of the gods *triśūlāṅka* whose emblem is the trident *kapālakṛtabhūṣaṇa* who has made skulls (his) ornament *kair* what are *upāyair* the (various) means by which *digdeśakālaśūnyā* (the supreme state) that is free from (any sense of) direction, space and time and *vyapadeśavivarjitā* that cannot be described, *bhairavasya yāvasthā bharitākārā* and is Bhairava's state of plenitude, *upalabhyate* be realized? *kathaṃ* How can *parā devī* the Supreme Goddess *mukhaṃ tasya bhavet* be his mouth (through which to enter into him)? *bhairava* O Bhairava, *tathā me brūhi* pray tell me (this), *yathā* so that *ahaṃ vedmi* I may know it *samyag* properly.

Kṣemarāja

O God, Lord of the gods beginning with Brahmā and ending with transcendental Śiva (Anāśrita) who are the causal (Lords) and nature is to shine etc.

(*dyotana*)![35] 'You whose emblem is the trident' with three prongs, (that represent) the powers of the will (knowledge and action) that have expanded out from (Your) power of freedom. (You who have made) the skulls that are the fragments of the universe consisting of all the things that are denoted (by words and the words) that denote them, (serve) as ornaments that cover Your radiantly luminous nature because they make (Your) freedom manifest.

Having replied (by describing) the supreme power's nature that had previously been analysed as being 'free from (any sense of) direction and cannot be described', in order to reveal how to enter into it, he explains how it can be realized etc. (He says that there are various) means. The plural refers to the variety of the categories of means to realization, namely, Śāmbhava, Empowered and Individual, (which are respectively such) due to the wonderful variety of means (based on consciousness) devoid of thought constructs (of the Śāmbhava Means), the many and varied pure thought constructs (of the Empowered Means) and those of the inferior creative meditations (*bhāvanā*) (of the Individual Means). (The latter) that are (many and) diverse (comprise) the formation of place, the practice of the essence of language (*varṇa*), visualizations, the instruments (to attain elevated yogic states), and (the forms of) utterance that are (variously) based on the vital breath, body, intellect and the Void (of deep sleep) of the perceiver, that is, individual soul.

(How can the Supreme Goddess (*Parā devī*) be) the means (and channel through which to enter into him)? It was stated previously that (Śiva's) power is the means that '(it is said) here that Śiva's power (*śaivī*) is the means (*mukha*) (to attain Him)' (VBh 20d). Both (questions concerning Bhairava and the Goddess) have been asked in accord with that established teaching concerning the power which is one with the Lord. O Bhairava, tell me (this), so that I may know it and that You may make it known to me.

The commentary from here onwards has been written by the venerable Śivopādhyāya. Having deliberated in this way on the matter that has been

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[35] Kṣemarāja says here that Bhairava is the Lord of the so-called causal deities (*karaṇadevatā*). This common group consists of Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Rudra, Maheśvara and Anāśrita (transcendental) Śiva. They govern the gross elements and what stands beyond them. See Dyczkowski 2004: 55 ff and Dyczkowski 1992b: 211 ff. for a schematic presentation of the causal deities and how the *Svacchandatantra* relates them to six levels of Voidness.

asked, he (now goes on to) present one after another, in due order (*krameṇa*), the knowledge of (each of) the planes (of Yoga) (*bhūmikājñānāni*).

The Meditations

1) Filling the Places the Breaths Originate

श्रीभैरव उवाच
ऊर्ध्वे प्राणो ह्यधो जीवो विसर्गात्मा परोच्चरेत् ।
उत्पत्तिद्वितयस्थाने भरणाद्भरिता स्थितिः ॥ २४ ॥

śrībhairava uvāca

ūrdhve prāṇo hy adho jīvo visargātmā paroccaret |
utpattidvitayasthāne bharaṇāt bharitā sthitiḥ || 24 ||

The[36] exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) (*haṃ*)[37] is above and the living being (the inhaled breath) (*jīva*) (*saḥ*) is below (the goddess) Parā who is emission (*visarga*), is uttering forth (and manifesting in this way) within the two places where they originate. (The yogi attains) the state of fullness by filling (them). (24)

Word-for-word meaning: *prāṇo* the exhaled breath *ūrdhve* is above *jīvo* the living being (the inhaled breath) *hy adho* is below Parā *visargātmā* who is emission, *paroccaret* is uttering forth (and manifesting in this way) *utpatti-dvitayasthāne* within the two places where they originate (The yogi attains) *bharitā sthitiḥ* the state of fullness *bharaṇāt* by filling (them).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Exhalation is 'above', in the End of the Twelve, in the form of the vital force of the breath (*prāṇana*). The one called the living being is a particular modality of the mind which should be placed 'below', that is, in the Heart.[38] The living

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[36] Verses 24 to 31 are meditations on the breath. Verses 28 to 30 concern Kuṇḍalinī.

[37] See the extensive commentary below on verses 154–156 and the discussion in the introduction.

[38] The Heart is commonly likened to a cave. According to a common image in the Upaniṣads, the individual soul resides there. It is like a flame 'the size of a thumb'

being, that is, the exhaled breath is where the Heart is located. (The inhaled breath is called) 'the living being' (*jīva*) because it is due to that that (a living being) lives and (it is 'below') because food and drink flows out by the lower path (as excrement and urine) and and so the one who has these adjuncts is called the 'living being'. It is the one whose nature is 'emission', which is the instrumental cause of the condition of 'inner' and 'outer'. It is by means of that also that Parā herself comes to be uttered. (As) AHAṂ ('I (am)') (Parā) is mounted on the inner cycle of these two. By their division (as exhalation and inhalation) AHAṂ manifests by concentrating (and sustained awareness) (*dhāraṇāt*) on their arising (first of all), in the End of the Twelve and, (then) secondly, in the heart. By abiding there (in these two places the yogi attains) the state of the plenitude (of divine consciousness) and, by forgetting all the limiting adjuncts (of the body), he possesses the reflective awareness of (the essence of his subjectivity as) AHAṂ. This is the syntax (*saṃbandha*) (and prose order of this verse). Such is the first meditation (*dhāraṇā*).

Śivopādhyāya

1) (The Śāmbhava Penetration) That which is '**above**' is the exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) that flows from the Heart up to the End of the Twelve. That which is '**below**' is '**the living being**' (*jīva*), that is, the exhaled breath (that flows) from the End of the Twelve (down) to the Heart. This Goddess Parā is '**uttering forth**' (these two), that is, she abides always uttering Herself forth (spontaneously) (as the two breaths). How is '**emission**'? It is Her (very) nature, which is reflective awareness (*vimarśa*), the instrumental cause of the relationship between inner and outer. (Again,) She is the unfolding of the primordial power (of consciousness) that starts with the vital breath for if it were not to

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that burns steadily, without flickering in the darkness. The vital breath is believed to enter the body of the fetus in the course of gestation through the top of the head. It travels down into the heart, where it takes up its residence. The individual soul is transported from life to life enveloped in the vital breath. Manipulations of the individual soul for ritual purposes, for example, in the course of the rites of initiation (see Dyczkowski 1992a: 235–240) make use of this association with the lunar breath. Accordingly, the downward moving breath of inhalation (*apāna*) that comes to rest here is commonly called '*jīva*' (individual soul) in the Tantras, as well as in tracts on Yoga and elsewhere.

be pervaded by that, the fixed (measured) flow of the breath, would not be possible. That is said in the venerable *Svacchandatantra*:

'The vital breath consists of exhalation and inhalation with respect to the filling of emission.'[39]

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[39] *Svacchandatantra* 7/25ab 'The letter H is considered to be exhalation.' (SvT 4/257)

Kṣemarāja: 'It was said before that exhalation is said to have the form of a plough and consists of the undivided reflective awareness of all objects of denotation (i.e. entities) and (their) denotators (i.e. words). Through the sequence of descent taught (previously) which is heralded by the manifestation of the contraction (of consciousness) made manifest by the freedom (of consciousness), the universal breath, which is the vitalizing life-force (*prāṇana*), assumes (its natural) material form (*prākṛtaṃ rūpam*). It is the breath (*prāṇa*) by virtue of the reflective awareness which befits the plane of rest and (that of) grasping which is the desire to lay hold of (outer) things by resonating intensely. (This takes place) in order to fill inwardly by drawing that (breath towards itself) in the course of entry heralded by its manifestation so that emission, which is the external emanation of each individual existing thing with all things, (may take place) 'with respect to the filling of emission'.

> 'The letter H is considered to be exhalation. It acts (impelled spontaneously) by itself, its form (bent like) that of a plough.' SvT 4/257cd

This Unstruck Sound is in the form of a plough. The letter H is the resonance of Unstruck Sound. In accord with the teachings to come i.e. 'the goddess utters forth by herself (spontaneously)', (that Unstruck Sound) acts (spontaneously) by itself. In accord with the view of another (school of) Tantra 'the supreme seed is called Sound (*nāda*)' (*Kālottara* 1/5) The vital breath of all (living beings) pulsing radiantly (spontaneously) by itself is considered to be the living being (*jīva*) otherwise called the vital force (*prāṇana*) which has been studied without interruption as the traditional teaching of the Masters.

Now, (let us) consider the matter in detail. That which has the shape of a plough, encompassing (within itself) the entire universe, has the form of Kuṇḍalinī, that is, a sleeping serpent. It acts by itself in the sense that it does so (spontaneously) by itself, that is, it abides (as it is) once penetrated the nature of the vital breath (*prāṇa*) having submerged the reflective awareness of (Unstruck) Sound (as it transits from it to the other). The Supreme Goddess called consciousness is Śakti who, having encompassed everything into herself abides as Supreme Kuṇḍalinī. As such, she is reflective awareness that is the Kuṇḍalinī of the Letters (*varṇakuṇḍalinī*) which is Unstruck Sound. The traditional teaching is that once manifested

As this is so, there are two places where (the breaths) arise. (These are) the locations of the external and internal origination (of the breath), that is, the End of the Twelve and the Heart, respectively. **'By filling'** there, that is, by means of Bhairava's power, which is the perpetually unfolding, initial radiant pulse of (consciousness), (the yogi attains) the state of fullness, that is, Bhairava's state becomes manifest.

2) (The Śāmbhava Penetration) Now (another meaning is as follows from the point of view of the rhythm of perception in consonance with that of the vital breath). 'Above' is the subtle flow of the vital breath within the outpouring of all the senses, that gives life to the objects of sense. And the living being that is below is inhalation that enters in having appropriated all the objects of sense. It is this itself that, in accord with the stated practice, is Parā who is uttering forth (and manifesting in this way). She shines constantly in this way in the place where the object arises, and in the Heart which is the place where the subject arises and so too on the plane where it unites with the object. (The meaning of) **'by filling that'** is as before.

3) (The Individual Penetration) Moreover, (there is a third meaning). Exhalation that gives life to all denotators (*vācaka*) and is the letter A is **'above'** on the plane where exhalation and inhalation unfold. The living being that is the letter S, is **'below'**, that is, within. The mass of phonemes associated with the Mothers (who govern the phonemic energies) beginning with A and ending with S. This is this (goddess) Parā who is emission and, as the energy of the letter H exhibited at the extremity (of the End of the Twelve), She is (Unstruck) Sound that **'is uttering forth (and manifesting in this way)'** having crossed over the universe of all the objects of denotation (of words) and (the words that are) their denotators by means of the sequence of the cycle of the Mothers of the phonemes.[40] (The meaning is that) she shines radiantly with

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radiantly (as such), submerging that nature inwardly, she shines as Prāṇa Kuṇḍalinī. Again, the vital breath, the nature of which has been explained in this way, is HAṀSA that, flowing spontaneously (*svarasena*) above and below is such because it manifests vibrantly as the reflective awareness of the letters H and S that are 'abandonment' (*hāna*) (in exhalation) and 'assumption' (*samādhāna*) (in inhalation, respectively).

[40] The eight Mothers each govern a section (*varga*) of the alphabet, that is the vowels (A-Ḥ), gutterals (K to Ṅ), palatals (C to Ñ), celebrals (Ṭ to Ṇ), labials (P to M), semi-vowels (Y to V), sibillants (Ś to S) and the aspirate H.

her own vitality (*ojas*) having overcome the plane of duality. And so, having contemplated the letters A and H 'within the two places where they originate' the dynamic union of Śiva and Śakti (takes place), as before, within the Heart (H) and the End of the Twelve (A).

4) (The Empowered Penetration) Again, (there is a fourth meaning). Exhalation is 'above' by virtue of its superiority. It is the extending flow of will, knowledge and action that impels (and vitalizes) (*anuprāṇaka*) all things. 'The living being' is 'below'. It is inferior as the objectivity which is the object of reflective awareness and its nature is the object of will, knowledge and action. As the Moon, it is the cause of the living condition of transmigrating beings. That is the goddess Parā who is being uttered as the three energies, (as Parā—the will), Parāparā (knowledge) and in the form of Aparā (action). She moves as the most excellent (Parā) and is perpetually present as the effulgence (of the light of consciousness) at one with all things. Taking that to be so, (Her) arising is within the plane of the object. That which is denoted by the word 'two' is the union of the object of illumination and (the Light that) illumines it. It is the plane of the means of knowledge. The 'place' is the plane of the subject which is the abode of rest of both of them. '(The yogi attains) the state of fullness by filling (them).' (They are filled in accord with the teaching that 'the Fourth should be sprinkled like oil into the three' (ŚSū 3/21) that is, by flooding them with bliss of the Fourth state which is the goddess Parā, (the yogi attains) a state of fullness.

5) (The Empowered Penetration) Again, another (meaning is) that 'above', that is, above the Path at the end of Māyā is exhalation (*prāṇa*) which is the reality level of Śiva and Śakti. Pervading the pure and the impure Path, it gives it life. Below it is the living being which is the principle of the Self denoted by the word Nara (Man) that has appropriated the aggregate of the reality levels from Māyā onwards (down to Earth). This (goddess) Parā is uttering forth (and manifesting) in this way. Śaivī, (Śiva's) power of freedom, expands out in this way. Thus, 'by filling' 'the two places where they originate', that is, the two Paths, pure and impure, that are in the process of arising by the pervasion of Parā-śakti. Attaining that state of oneness (*sāmarasya*) by contemplating that everything is of the nature of all things, '(the yogi attains) the state of fullness'. Here, in keeping with this explanation, one should follow (teachings concerning) the pervasion of Mantra taught by the venerable *Parātrīśikā*.

6) (The Individual Penetration) Another (and final meaning) is that the exhaled breath is the letter H (i.e HAṂ) which is expanding out by itself (spontaneously) 'above' from the abode of consciousness which is Anuttara Akula. 'Below' is the living being, the letter S, which is emission (*visarga*) vivified by the aspirate (Ḥ) (i.e. SAḤ). That is (the goddess) Parā who is the Gander (*haṃsī*) that abandons (*hāna*) and takes up (*samādāna*). Thus, one as if perceives here the reflective awareness which is the recognition of one's own Self as 'I am he' (*ahaṃsaḥ*). For 'by filling' the two places, namely, the heart and the End of the Twelve where the letters H and S arise (respectively) 'within the two places where they originate'. By attaining the strength of Śakti by the practice of adhering (attentively) to the reflective awareness of these phonemes (the yogi attains) Bhairava's state.

In this way, in the first and second explanations given here, the Śāmbhava penetration is taught, which is the practice of adhering to the (conscious) nature free of thought constructs. The empowered (means is taught) in the fourth and the fifth (explanations). It is the reflective awareness of pure thought constructs which are the contemplation that everything is the subjectivity (*ahantā*) (of pure Bhairava consciousness). (The means taught) in the third and sixth (explanations) is the Individual One which is predominantly based on the reflective awareness of particular phonemes. As is said in the *Mālinīvijaya* (concerning the three categories of penetrations of the power of grace):[41]

'The penetration (*āveśa*) that arises for one who does not think of anything by an intense (*guruṇā*) awakening (*prabodhataḥ*) (of consciousness),[42] is said to be the one pertaining to Śiva (*śāmbhava*).

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[41] Śivopādhyāya quotes here from the *Tantrāloka*. The first three verse are TĀ 1/168–170. These are literal citations from the *Mālinīvijayottara* (verses 2/23, 22 and 21) in reverse order. The following verses are TĀ 1/171–179ab which are the beginning of a detailed explanation that concludes with 1/211 which Śivopādhyāya quotes at the end.

[42] This line also means 'The penetration that arises for one due to an intense insight brought about by the teacher (*guruṇā*)'. This is certainly the original intended sense, which Abhinavagupta does not deny, but chooses to consider secondary with respect to this one and so I have translated accordingly. See TĀ 1/172 ff.

The penetration one attains whilst thinking of (the nature of) reality (*vastu*) with the mind alone without (having to practice) the utterance of Mantra (*uccāra*) (or the like),[43] is here called Empowered (*śākta*).

The penetration that takes place by (the practice) of the utterance (of Mantra and the upward movement of the vital breath and consciousness) (*uccāra*), the yogic instruments (*karaṇa*),[44] visualization (*dhyāna*), the letters (*varṇa*) (as the subtle practice of Mantra) and the conception of locations (*sthāna-*

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[43] This is the common meaning of the term '*uccāra*'. The literal meaning of the word is 'upward movement' denoting, originally in a purely phonetic context, the upward movement of the breath through the loci of articulation, striking which phonemes are produced. In the context of the recitation of Mantra it denotes the upward flow of the sonic energy of the Mantra. It is a fundamental practice of Śaiva Yoga and indeed that of the early Tantras in general including Vaiṣṇava and Buddhist. Another essential dimension along with the sonic is *prāṇic*. The Mantra's sonic energy rises through the subtle body sustained and energized by the flow of the vital breath that transports it. A well know representation of this process is the upward movement of Kuṇḍalinī who is at once the power of the vital breath (*prāṇaśakti*), speech (*vācchakti*) and consciousness (*cicchakti*) reflecting an early Upaniṣadic triad of breath, speech and mind. Indeed, '*uccāra*' may be understood entirely in terms as of the vital breath. A passage in chapter five of the *Tantrāloka* (v 43 ff) describes how the upward movement of the vital breath (without Mantra) ascends through progressively evolving levels of bliss corresponding to forms of the vital breath. In that context, one could, accordingly, translate '*uccāra*' as the 'utterance or the upward movement of the vital breath' (*prāṇatattvasamuccāra*). Abhinava goes further by outlining an '*uccāra*' of the 'conscious nature' (*cidātman*) (ibid. v 62cd-74ab). Clearly this kind of upward movement is the most 'internal' of all. Indeed, its exposition in chapter five, which deals with the Individual Means, can only be understood if we take it to begin at that level, evolving rapidly into the highest level of practice.

[44] Abhinava draws his definition of the yogic instruments from the *Triśirobhairava* which he quotes in chapter five of the *Tantrāloka*. The reader is referred there for a detailed explanation where we are told that:

> 'The yogic instrument (*karaṇa*) is a practice based on awakened (individual) consciousness (*bodha*). (The wise) say that it is of seven types, namely, 1) that of the object of perception, 2) the perceiver, 3) consciousness (*cit*), 4) pervasion, 5) abandonment, 6) inclusion and 7) bringing together. (The practice of) 'posture' is to be established in one's own nature when (all things are) gathered together preceded by the pervasion of that (consciousness).' 5/128cd-130ab (129cd-131ab).

kalpanā) (to make offerings and on which to concentrate) is rightly said to be Individual[45] (*āṇava*).[46]

The expression 'one who does not think of anything'[47] (implies that in this means) thought constructs are of no use. Thus (as they are of no use and do not arise) the attainment of the object of realization (*jñeyasamāpatti*) is said to be instantaneous.

How does this (realization) take place? (This takes place), says (the Lord) by means of that extremely intense (*guruṇā*) and awakened insight (*bodha*) directed at the object of realisation (*jñeya*) that develops in an instant.[48]

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[45] Literally 'pertaining to the individual soul'. Abhinava takes care to follow this scheme in the following chapters 2 to 5 of his *Tantrāloka* which deal with these means to realization. In his presentation of the means pertaining to Śiva (*śāmbhavopāya*), he focuses on the state of the aspirant 'who does not think of anything', which he understands to be the dynamic condition of pure indeterminate (*nirvikalpa*) subjectivity (*aham*). His exposition of the Empowered Means focuses on 'conceiving reality by the mind alone'. Accordingly, he deals with the dynamism of the mental world of thought, that is, determinate (*savikalpa*) perceptions and their transformation into the pure Śiva consciousness of the liberated state. Describing the practice of the Individual Means, he deals, one after another, with what he understands to be the primary forms of the practices listed here. These are based, initially at least, on the activity of the psycho-physical complex with which the individual soul is identified. Thus, they include the most extensive part of most Tantric practice, namely ritual, and those practices derived from it, such as the repeated recitation of Mantra (*japa*). Descriptions of rituals make up half the *Tantrāloka*, that is, from chapter fifteen to almost the end. So all of that section may be taken to be primarily concerned with the Individual Means, although Abhinava perceives that many of these rituals extend much beyond the domain of action into the parallel ones of the higher means as, indeed, they must, if they are to be effective.

[46] TĀ 1/168–170, corresponding to MV 2/23, 22 and 21.

[47] See above, 1/168.

[48] The most evident meaning of the verse from the MV quoted here is that the *śāmbhava* penetration takes place in the disciple who is free of thought when he is awakened by the teacher directly. Abhinava has chosen to see a different meaning here, advancing a somewhat strained interpretation of this verse. The reason for this is that he needs to find scriptural sanction for a feature of what he takes to be the most elevated practice of the Krama tradition which he presents as the

(The suffix) '*tasi*' (at the end of the word '*prabodhataḥ*') according to this explanation (of the verse in the *Mālinīvijayottara*) optionally imparts (to the word to which it is suffixed) the sense of the instrumental case. Otherwise (the two words can also be understood) as not being in concord.

And (the term) 'penetration' (*āveśa*) is that state (of identity) with supreme (awakened consciousness) (*paratadrūpatā*) (that emerges) from Śambhu, Who is undivided from (His own) power and precedes (all other means to realization). (It takes place) by virtue of the submergence of that (contracted) nature of the one who is not free (*asvatantra*) which is one's own nature (as a fettered soul) (*svatadrūpatā*).[49]

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inner culminating secret of Trika, despite its evident absence in the MV, his basic authority (see TĀ 1/17). Krama strongly emphasises the importance of intense, sudden (*sahasa*) empowerment. Liberation is achieved by an intense, instantaneous break with duality. Abhinava repeatedly asserts in various contexts that this may take place in one who is in some inscrutable way fit to receive it, even without a teacher. Thus, he stresses that the personal insight that arises spontaneously (*svataḥ*) is superior to one attained through a teacher or scripture, taking care to state that they may lead from one to the other and so sustain each other without contradiction. Again, it is possible to be born a liberated or partially liberated soul. He is himself an example (see TĀ 1/1). One may achieve the status of an enlightened teacher by oneself (*svayaṃsaṃsiddhika*). This kind of teacher, Abhinava affirms is the best of all (TĀ 4/74cd-76ab). Thus, initiation directly from the goddesses of consciousness is possible (see TĀ 4/42cd-43ab) as it is by the progressive development of one's own insight (ibid. 4/60cd-62ab) and, along with that, the intensity (*gurutaḥ*) of one's own efforts (ibid. 13/142cd-143ab). Again, the teacher may indeed occasion liberation but, for those who are ready all that is required is his glance or touch. No Means—*Anupāya*—is not literally no means at all, it is an extremely subtle means that attains its goal effortlessly in an instant. Jayaratha elaborates, telling us that it takes place in a number of ways by a direct transfer of spiritual energy of the teacher into the disciple, especially by his gaze (ibid. 2/2 and commentary). Abhinava himself confirms, from the disciple's point of view, that by just seeing a fully enlightened teacher, he is enlightened (2/40), when he is ready and fit to be so.

[49] This translation conforms to Jayaratha's interpretation, as it must for the translation of his commentary to make sense and, moreover, seems to me to be basically correct. Here we find the essential features of *āveśa* as understood by these Kashmiri teachers which clearly distinguishes its common, non-technical sense i.e. 'possession'. According to Jayaratha, Abhinava contrasts two aspects of 'that

nature' (*tadrūpatā*) of 'one who is not free'. There is 'one's own nature' (*svatadrūpatā*), which is in a contracted state of consciousness. There is that of 'the other' (*para*), which is the 'supreme' (*paratadrūpatā*), uncontracted consciousness of Śiva. In other words, the same consciousness of 'one who is not free' has two aspects. One is contracted and is unique to each individual soul. The other is that of the universal consciousness of Śiva who, in relation to the contracted aspect, is 'other' and 'supreme'. One is reminded here of Utpaladeva's standard definition of ignorance, that is, of the soul's fundamental Impurity (*āṇavamala*):

> 'As it conceals one's own nature this is the soul's (essential) Impurity (*āṇavamala*). It is two-fold (as) the loss of the freedom of (its innate) consciousness and so too (along with it) the lack of consciousness of (its innate) freedom.' ĪP 3/2/4 (quoted in TĀv ad 1/23)

When the individual soul is penetrated by Śiva's power which is His will (*icchāśakti*) and freedom itself (*svātantrya*) that proceedes from Him, the former aspect is 'submerged' i.e., subordinated to the other aspect that, as a consequence, emerges and becomes primary. Thus, the fundamental Impurity of ignorance is removed. The resultant state is the original one which 'precedes it' namely, that of knowledge that characterizes the liberated condition whilst still alive in which individual consciousness persists but is subordinated to Supreme Śiva consciousness with respect to which it is secondary. Accordingly, Jayaratha quotes Utpaladeva as saying that complete penetration both ways (*sama-āveśa*) by Śiva's power amounts to that.

Wallis (thesis p. 299–300) prefers to disregard Jayaratha's interpretation and sees a genitive rather than an ablative of the word *śambhoḥ*. So according to him the 'penetration' is (the state) 'of the Lord'. In order to do this he somehow continues to think of '*śambhoḥ*' as an ablative in order to make *ādyāt* agree with it translating it as an adjective i.e. as 'primordial' (Lord). At the same time, he makes it agree with 'submersion' (which he translates as 'suppressing'). He is aware of this problem and so offers two translations. This first which he prefers is:

> '*Āveśa* [penetration] is that state which conforms itself (only) to the Supreme ((which initially appears) as 'other'), due to a prior act of suppressing conformity to the individual self (*sva*), which lacks autonomy. It is (the state) of the primordial Lord, united with his Power.'

The second interpretation which he says 'is not impossible' is rendered thus:

> 'Due to submergence that which has the quality of the self—(yet) lacks autonomy—there comes about a state which has the quality of the Supreme: this is *āveśa* (penetration) (which comes) from the primordial Lord, united with his power.'

Thus the meaning of this statement here is this: the object of realization (*vijñeya*), unfolding by itself spontaneously, even without (any intervening) intellection (*niścaya*), suddenly subordinating the (limited) subject reflected in the mirror of the (supreme) subject (*mātṛ*), continuously revealing its own glory (*vibhūti*), abides at increasingly higher levels (*tāratamyataḥ*) within the excellence of the purity (*nairmalya*) of the Heart (of reflective awareness).

Moreover, that which is to be known (*jñeya*) is of two kinds, namely, (pure) consciousness alone (*cinmātra*) and the insentient (*jaḍa*). And the first (kind) is conceived (*kalpita*) (to be Śiva for the purpose of instruction and as an object of meditation and the like), while the other (kind) is thus real (and true as it stands).[50] Such is the distinction between them.

(An outer) penetration (*samāveśa*) by an insentient (object pictured in consciousness) is in the form of (unity-in-difference like an) image reflected (in a mirror).[51] The (inner contemplative) penetration by (pure) consciousness is (experienced as one's own) identity with it. Indeed, it is nothing else![52]

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[50] See TĀ 1/72ab-73ab (1/72–73). I am following Jayaratha's interpretation even though, it is clearly forced. A simple emendation of *cādyaṃ* ('and the first' (kind)) to *cāntyaṃ* ('and the latter') would remedy the problem. Thus 'the latter' is 'the insentient', that is, objectivity, which is indeed 'conceived', that is, the object of conceptualization. Thus 'the other' would be pure consciousness that is free of all conceptualization and so is 'real' and true—*satyam*—as it stands.

[51] Read *sa praticchandakākṛtiḥ* for *sapraticchandakākṛtiḥ*.

[52] In order to clarify what he means by 'penetration', Abhinava distinguishes between two kinds of 'penetration' (*samāveśa*) into consciousness according to whether what penetrates into consciousness is insentient or consciousness itself. This is essentially the attainment of oneness between the polarities that are penetrating each other. This can only take place within the essential subjectivity of the individual soul, which is consciousness, with Śiva Who is also consciousness.

Implicitely understanding, it seems, '*jaḍa*' to mean not just 'insentient' but, some kind of supernatural being, Wallis sees in these two verses Abhinava's refutation of the commonly accepted meaning of *samāveśa* or *āveśa* as simply 'possession'. Thus he comments (thesis p. 301):

> 'In a rather clever hermeneutical move, Abhinava argues that there are only two 'things' that exist, objects and subject(s)—and possession by an insentient object cannot mean anything but a reflection of the image of that object in consciousness, (e.g. the mind obsessing over something), while possession by awareness, which is one's own innate being, can only mean oneness with it.

Thus, Śiva's (*śāmbhava*) penetration is (a state of) consciousness (*saṃvitti*) free of thought constructs (*avikalpā saṃvitti*) that, independent of meditation (*bhāvanā*) or the like, has attained a state of oneness with Śiva.

He who is established on the path free of thought constructs, by whatever way he enters from Sadāśiva to Earth, he becomes identified through it with Śiva.'[53]

When the Heart is pure and has within it a light that illumines the aspect which is the foremost[54] (ever) radiant plane (then, within that and) by means

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In this *advaita* view, there is only one undifferentiated awareness that all sentient beings participate in, thus possession is generally conceived as meaningless; there is no separate being that can enter you.' We should not forget, however, that 'possession' by gods or demons is considered to be very real in the realm of daily. Much is done to prevent or remedy it. It is a phenomenon common all over India, indeed, Asia, although in some places it occurs more extensively and in many varied way and in others less. Kerala for example and South India in general, possession is a prominent part of religious belief and has given rise to extensive cultural phenomena like dances and extensive temple cults. Indeed, priests, especially of lower castes, are expected to be possessed.

[53] The 'path free of thought constructs' is the Divine Means, which pertains to Śiva directly as the exercise of it involves the pure reflective awareness, undistracted by thought constructs, of the Light of consciousness. According to the later higher exegesis by Abhinavagupta, concretely, it involves maintaining an unwavering awareness of the 'Iness' which is the essence of the pure subjectivity of consciousness unsullied by even a trace of objectivity. Very few people can practice in this way because they are led away from focusing on consciousness by the distracting desire or fear of something or other which precipitates into thought. It presupposes a perfect detachment from outer objectivity which can only be achieved by cultivating sound reasoning and discernment of ultimate reality. This is achieved by practicing the Empowered Means. But that too is very difficult for the great majority of people who must therefore resort to taking external supports, such as the practice of yogic postures (*āsana*), recitation of mantras, devotional songs, rituals, and the like along with more internal practices like meditation and visualization (for example of the yogic centres in the body or deities). But however, much they may involve the formation of thought constructs, they are grounded in the pure Śiva consciousness free of thought constructs and function effectively to the degree in which it unfolds and develops. Thus, its grace is both the basis of any means by which the individual soul is freed and the ultimate goal.

[54] The word for 'foremost'—*prāgrya*—can also mean 'preceding' 'prior'. It seems that

of that itself (one attains) the state of Supreme Śiva Who is consciousness.[55] In this way Sumati's disciples[56] know this means, the true one (*sadupāya*),[57] which is an aspect of the power of the supreme (*parā*) will and is the penetration called 'pertaining to Śiva'.[58]

(Śivopādhyāya introduces the following meditation as follows). Now (he will teach) how the particular states of the vital breath, that is, filling, retention and exhalation that occur (without effort) by themselves, (also) all arise effortlessly as the perceivers, that is Differentiated (*sakala*), Devoid of Energy for Dissolution (*pralayākala*) and the rest.

Abhinava chose this word to also indicate that this is the transcendental level of pure consciousness that precedes manifestation. Moreover it is the condition of consciousness prior to the formation of differentiated perceptions.

[55] In the previous verse, Abhinava explained that in the pure consciousness of Śāmbhava practice, the yogi can identify with Śiva by means of any one of the thirty-five principles from Earth to Sadāśiva. Here he explains how the adept enters into Supreme Śiva from the thirty-sixth principle, that is, Śiva when it is illumined by the light of the Heart which is supreme subjectivity.

Thus, another possible translation of this verse could be: 'When the Heart (of reflective awareness) is pure and shines with the Light that illumines the aspect of the plane of the effulgent pulse of consciousness which precedes (all others) then, by means of that, one becomes Supreme Śiva Who is consciousness.'

[56] In the citation of this verse in VBh p. 20 *sumatyantenivāsinaḥ* reads *amanyanta nirāsinaḥ*. I have translated *antevasinaḥ* to means 'disciples' as Jayaratha explains. However, I take the use of the plural here as honorific of Sumati's one most excellent disciple namely, Śambhunātha, Abhinava's Trika teacher.

[57] All practice is based on developing and sustaining an expanded state of consciousness free of thought constructs. In this perspective, the Śāmbhava Means is ultimately the only true (*sat*) one grounded in Being (*sat*) which only pure consciousness can experience directly. Free of restrictions, it operates directly within consciousness, that is, reality itself. Accordingly, it is also called the Direct Means or the Means of Direct Experience (*sākṣādupāya*). Conversely, the other means operate in the domain of the thought, notions and duality. The Śāmbhava Means is the means that perates with the truly existent, unconditioned and one. As we shall see in the very next verse, the others operate in the domain of the means of Māyā (*māyopāya*).

[58] TĀ 1/168–179ab, 211–213.

The wise know that exhalation (*recaka*) is the externalization from the cavity of the lotus of the heart that takes place spontaneously of the vital breaths in which effort has ceased.[59]

'Filling' is said to be the contact (of the breath) with the body of the breaths as they move down from a distance of the external twelve finger space.[60]

'That which yogis experience as long as inhalation has set and exhalation has not yet risen within the heart is (called) breath retention.'[61]

Such is the experience yogis have who are transported by that meditation (*cintā*) during the process of the descent and ascent (of the vital breath) in the states of exhalation and inhalation. Accordingly, he teaches the manner of attention to that object (*viṣaya* of awareness) that has been explained in the Yogaśāstras.

Discussion

In the course of his commentary on the etymology of Bhairava's name Abhinava presents in his *Tantrāloka* (1/99cd), Jayaratha quotes just the last quarter of this verse which says that '(The yogi attains) the state of fullness by filling (the places of origin of the vital breath)' He is thus suggesting that Bhairava ('the One Who fills and is full') is alluded to here. Jayaratha also suggests, presuming that his readers would know, that the entire verse teaches an important practice to attain or realize the essential plenitude of one's own Bhairava consciousness. Swami Lakshmanjoo explains that by this practice the yogi becomes one with Bhairava because Bhairava Himself is the state of perfect satisfaction and plenitude in which nothing is missing and comes to experience as one's own essential nature by becoming 'full'. This means realizing by this practice that Bhairava's plenitude is that of one's own nature. This involves first of all establishing clearly by close attention that the breath ascends and descends along a vertical axis of which the two extremes are the Heart and the End of the Twelve both of which are filled with the Void of con-

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[59] YVā 2/25/6 Printed edition reads *svarasena* for *svairam* which means the same. Corrected in accord with the reading in the edition *evātta-* for *evāsta-*.

[60] YVā 2/25/7 I have adopted the reading of the printed edition of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha*—*adhaḥ*—'down' for *hradaḥ*—'from the heart'.

[61] YVā 2/25/9 Printed edition of the YVā reads *-bhyudito* for *-bhyuditī*.

sciousness. According to the depth and intensity of awareness, the Heart is experienced variously. At the most superficial level, it is a vital centre located in the chest from which the exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) ascends and into which the inhaled breath (*apāna*) descends. At a deeper level of awareness, it is the Void which is the experience of the core of the soul's pure conscious Being.

2) Abiding in the Two Voids from which the Breaths Originate

मरुतोऽन्तर्बहिर्वापि वियद्युग्मानिवर्तनात् ।
भैरव्या भैरवस्येत्थं भैरवि व्यज्यते वपुः ॥ २५ ॥

maruto 'ntarbahirvāpi vidyudutyugmānivartanāt |
bhairavyā bhairavasyetthaṁ bhairavi vyajate vapuḥ || 25 ||

O Bhairavī, by not returning out from the two voids of the breath, whether internal or external, Bhairavī reveals in this way Bhairava's body.[62] (25)

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[62] The following is a long note found in the margin of one of the manuscripts that has been recorded in a footnote in the printed edition. Thus we read this statement made by the editor: 'An extra amount of text beginning with what has been said in the first half and ending the statement—(their) body has been revealed' is found in MS Kh. That has been explained and, different and alternative, has (been taken) from that and is placed (here) in the commentary.'

'Bhairava's body is revealed by the cause that precedes and follows that has been stated or in the manner that will be and has been stated. (The body of) which Bhairava? That of Bhairavī's (that is, by its) superimposition. This is the logical connection of the words (as they appear in the verse), or else it is Bhairavī's body that is revealed. (The body) of which Bhairavī? The meaning is that it is that of Bhairava and Bhairavī's nature. Just by this are indicated the attributes (of the Deity) such as (it's being) eternal and pervasive and (so too its) supreme non-dual life which is (its) freedom the nature of which is Supreme Speech. This alone is one that shines as supreme subjectivity, the reality free of desire. Some (consider) that to be Bhairavī's essential nature; some call it Bhairava and the Goddess. Is that which is said to be the perceiver's nature that. (That is,) by diminishing it (becomes) the object of attainment of that nature or not? If it is of that nature, that is that itself and so what is the use of imagining some other reality? If it is not of that nature, because each particular thing is different (from every other), it is as if empty and so is the same as (the void of) others. Insofar as, devoid of freedom, it is the reality called Emptiness that is the object of practice for those who know

Word-for-word meaning: *bhairavi* O Bhairavī *viyadyugmānivartanāt* by not returning out from the two voids *maruto'ntar bahir vāpi* of the breath, whether internal or external *bhairavyā* Bhairavī reveals *vyajyate bhairavasyetthaṃ* in this way Bhairava's *vapuḥ* body.

Swamijī: 'Bhairavī means uninterrupted awareness' ... Here you have not to recite 'so' and 'haṃ'. It is without the recitation of 'sa' and 'ha'. It is only awareness that functions here.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'**The breath**' in the form of exhalation and inhalation is '**within the two voids**' internal and external, that is, the Heart and the End of the Twelve, by being in consonance (with them), that is, by neither unfolding or closing up (i.e. exhaling and inhaling), '**O Bhairavī!**', the body, that is, the essential nature of Bhairava, the supreme soul, is revealed, that is, shines (and is manifest).

Śivopādhyāya

'**The voids of the breath**' of exhalation and inhalation, '**internal and external**', are the space of the heart and that of the End of the Twelve. '**By not returning**' from there, that is, by (their) not returning, abiding instead for a moment in an introverted state by halting the two, that is, exhalation and inhalation. The body of Bhairava, which is Bhairavī, is characterized (in verse 15) that begins with: 'the bliss of one's own inner (*antar*) experience of oneself (*svānubhava*).'[63] (It ends with the line that follows): 'he should know His body as it truly is (not in any iconic form but as) immaculate and replenishing all things.' (Bhairava's

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the Vedānta, Akṣapāda and followers of the (Buddhist) Madhyamika. Thus, only the freedom that is reflective awareness is the most excellent of all. Some contemplate that same (reality) as the Sky and some as the reality which is the root of the Sky. That will be taught further ahead. Therefore it has been said that the beautiful body of Bhairavī and Bhairava has been revealed.'

[63] The complete verse 15 says: The bliss of one's own inner (*antar*) experience of oneself (*svānubhava*) (its) realm completely free of (all) conceptions, (is that) state of Bhairava's own nature—Bhairavī—(whose) form is (absolutely) full (perfect and complete).

body is) the light (of consciousness) and (its) reflective awareness. It is (its) two-fold nature as Śiva and Śakti, that is, as (the substance) that possesses attributes and (its) attributes (respectively). It is (thus) said to become clearly evident as it truly is, as just one reality. Exhalation arises from the *yantra*[64] of the lotus located in the heart and it sets in the space at the extremity of the outer twelve finger space. In the same way, exhalation arises from the external twelve finger space and it sets in the *yantra* of the lotus of the heart. (This goes on) in this way without ceasing (or interruption), in accord with the imparted teachings such as:

'These (phases in the breathing cycle) beginning with breath retention, external and internal, (go on) continuously. Having understood the nature of one's own exhalations and inhalations, it does not arise again.[65] Moving or standing, waking or dreaming, they are not blocked. Wind is, by nature, (always) moving.'[66]

All perceivers, be they birds, wild or domestic animals etc., always and everywhere in the course of night and day, (exercise) the eight (kinds of) breath control (taught in the commentary to the previous meditation) brought about spontaneously (by themselves) independently of (any conscious) effort on the

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[64] The word *yantra* can also mean 'machine'. But if that were the sense here we would expect another *yantra* in the End of the Twelve sucking in inhalation like the one in the heart that pumps out exhalation. Accordingly, I take the word *yantra* to refer to a symbolic geometric diagram projected into the Heart.

[65] YVā 2/25/19cd-20ab. The printed edition of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* reads *tān*—'those' for *svān*—'one's own'. The important point made here is that when it is said that the breath is blocked when absorption is successful and complete, this should not be literally understood. Clearly breathing must continue but it takes place in a different way. Normally, the vital breath in the unthinking individual expands and contracts in the Heart and the End of the Twelve in consonance with the rhythm of the breathing. In a state of deep contemplation of the flow of the breath continues whereas the pulse at the extremity of its course is stilled. Thus, experiencing the spontaneity of their flow the individual soul is no longer the agent of that movement. The flow is impelled directly to the universal consciousness that is the source of the breath.

[66] YVā 2/25/21cd-21ab. The printed edition of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* reads: *prakṛtyāticalānilāḥ* 'winds by nature move very much' for *prakṛtyā hi calo 'nilaḥ* 'Wind is, by nature, (always) moving.'

part of the individual soul (*puruṣa*). If they are known consciously in accord with their own true nature, they bestow liberation. For it is said:

'Whatever a person does and experiences inwardly recollecting these (eight), namely, breath retention and the rest, with awakened consciousness (*bodha*), (he experiences their spontaneity and so, reduced to nought,) the agent (who exerts an effort) is there (in that case) nothing at all.'

These (eight) are as follows:

1) The expulsion of exhalation (*prāṇarecaka*): The spontaneous extroversion from the lotus of the Heart of the exhaled breath is the state of the expulsion of exhalation (*prāṇarecaka*).
2) (External) filling (*pūraka*): The 'filling' of the outflows of exhalations from the Heart to the End of the Twelve is (their) contact with the limbs (of the body).
3) (Internal) filling (*pūraka*): The completely full touch of the limbs (of the body) when inhalation is in the course of returning from the outer location (spontaneously) without the effort of the individual soul is also (a form of) 'filling'.
4) (Internal) retention (*kumbhaka*): The state of breath retention persists as long as the exhaled breath has not arisen from the heart once the inhaled breath has ceased. Only yogis experience this state because the exhaled breath (*prāṇavāyu*) is always outside the body. Inner breath control (*prāṇāyama*) (is not the same). It is another (kind).[67]

In the same way, exhalation externally and inwardly is constantly also controlled (spontaneously) (*apānāyāma*). Thus:

1) (5) (External filling (*pūraka*)): The external state of filling inhalation (*apāna*) obtains for as long as inhalation does not arise once exhalation has come to an end in the outside space.
2) (6) (External filling (*pūraka*)): Similarly, the increasing density of the form of inhalation (as it develops) having arisen from the End of the Twelve is also (a form of) the external filling (of the breath).

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[67] Those who are not yogis do not pay attention to the phases of the breathing cycle. The breath comes and goes from outside the body without focusing awareness of its halting in the Heart. The yogis who do so realize a higher level of breathing within breath retention.

3) (7) (External retention (*kumbhaka*)): In the same way the condition of the inhaled breath within the extremity of the external twelve finger space is like that of a jar within clay that has still not been made. That is the state of the breath retention of inhalation.
4) (8) (External expulsion (of the breath) (*recaka*)): The introverted state of the inhaled breath, without it arising, is the external expulsion (of the breath) (*recaka*).[68]

Thus, there are two kinds of filling (*pūraka*), one by exhalation and the other by inhalation making eight kinds of breath control. These should be known according to their own specific nature (and as taking place spontaneously in accord with it) (*svasvabhāvatvena*). 1) The Heart, 2) the throat, 3) the palate, 4) the forehead, 5) the Cavity (of Brahmā), and 6) the End of the Twelve are the domains of the (upward) movement of the exhaled breath. (Similarly, there are six stages in the flow of inhalation down from) 1) the heart, 2 the Bulb (*kanda*) (around the genitals), 3) (the genitals that are the locus of) bliss, 4) (its) contraction and 5) expansion, and 6) (the lower) End of the Twelve. These are the domains of the movement of the inhaled breath.

When exhalation ceases and inhalation has not (yet) arisen, external (breath) retention takes place spontaneously. Similarly, the moment inhalation has ceased and exhalation has not arisen, inner (breath) retention takes place ṣpontaneously. This is (in both cases) the supreme abode (of the breath) because it is the centre (between the two). This same centre (is praised) in the *Brahmadarśana* (section) of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* in the (course of narrating the) story of Bhuṣuṇḍa (in the following verses):

'The essential nature (*rūpa*) of the Self is this pure, supreme consciousness (between the two breaths). That is that perpetually (shining) Light. Once that has been attained one no longer suffers.[69]

When exhalation has ceased and inhalation is about to commence, taking the support of external (breath) retention for a long time, one does not suffer again.

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[68] The moment inhalation has not yet commenced (it is suspended outside) where it orientates itself inwardly as an ejection (*recaka*) of the outer breath.

[69] YVā 2/25/60. The printed edition of the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* reads *paramaiva cit* for *paraiva cit*. The meaning is the same but metre of the former is nor correct. Again, the edition reads *etat tat tat sadābhāsam* 'that shines perpertually as this and that' for *etat tat satatābhāsam*—'that is that perpetually (shining) Light.

When inhalation has ceased and exhalation is about to commence, taking the support of internal (breath) retention for a long time one does not suffer again.'[70]

The state in the Centre (*madhyadaśā*) arises by not returning out from the two (Voids at the end of the two breaths) by resting in the state in the Centre, which is attainable (only) by yogis, between exhalation and inhalation. (It arises) because, as there is no return, for just a moment or a fraction of time, (consciousness) is introverted.

Now (he goes on) to say that due to the expansion in the centre, the inhaled and exhaled breaths neither enter nor exit.

3) Stilling the Breaths by Attending to the Centre

न व्रजेन्न विशेच्छक्तिर्मरुद्रूपा विकासिते ।
निर्विकल्पतया मध्ये तया भैरवरूपता ॥ २६ ॥

na vrajen na viśec chaktir marudrūpā vikāsite |
nirvikalpatayā madhye tayā bhairavarūpatā || 26 ||

The energy in the form of the vital breath should neither exit nor enter when the centre has unfolded (*vikāsite*)[71] by the (one pointed) state free of thought (that places them there and abides there). (Thus there,) by that (same power, the Yogi's) Bhairava nature (is made manifest).[72] (26)

Word-for-word meaning: *śaktir* The energy *marudrūpā* in the form of the vital breath *na* (should) neither *vrajen* exit *na* nor *viśec* enter *madhye* when the centre *vikāsite* has unfolded *nirvikalpatayā* by the (one pointed) state free of thought *tayā* by that (same power, the yogi's) *bhairavarūpatā* Bhairava nature (is made manifest).

Swami Lakshmanjoo explains: 'When you establish one-pointedness in the central vein—(*madhye* means in *suṣumnā*)—when you maintain one-point-

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[70] YVā 2/25/50cd-52ab.

[71] According to Swamijī the deeper meaning of '*vikāsite*', that literally means 'has unfolded', is 'already illuminated.'

[72] This verse is quoted in TĀv ad 5/22cd-23ab. Cf. The meditation taught in TĀ 5/22–23ab. Silburn translates, somewhat loosely: 'When the energy of the breath neither exits nor enters, it deploys itself in the centre. (There it abides) free of thought constructs. By means of that one attains the essence of Bhairava.'

edness in that central vein *nirvikalpatyā* [free of thought constructs], then what happens? The energy of breath neither goes out nor comes in because [that is when the Centre has expanded and] the central vein is already held in one-pointedness. It is already illuminated and by this process, one becomes one with Bhairava. This is *Śāmbhavopāya*, this is not *Śāktopāya* because there is only *nirvikalpabhāva* [the state free of thought constructs], no recitation of Mantra and no objectivity in that consciousness. It is spontaneous, centred awareness.' One may add that, as the practice involves initially exercising the breathing, it begins in the Individual Means.

Ānandabhaṭṭa[73]

The exhaled breath that is in the Heart should not exit nor should it enter from that place. Wherever it may be, may it remain just there unmoving, free of thought constructs. So too, in the same way, in the End of the Twelve, by being devoid of both motion and rest (*spandāspanda*), in the centre between them, Bhairava's nature becomes manifest in contemplative absorption free of thought constructs (*nirvikalpasamādhi*).

Śivopādhyāya

'The energy in the form of the vital breath should not exit' from the Heart and go to the End of the Twelve (nor) go from the End of the Twelve to the Heart when the centre, that is, the abode of the central channel, has unfolded by the (practice of) destroying thought constructs. The sense here is as follows: having cast the aggregate of all the powers of vision and the rest (of the senses) into their own respective objects simultaneously and observed one's

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[73] The version of the *Vijñānabhairava* commented by Ānandabhaṭṭa has two significant variants. It reads *vikāsate* for *vikāsite*. The meaning then is '(the energy of the breath) unfolds ...'. This reading makes it clear that the vital breath unfolds in the centre as Silburn's translation says. Again, Ānandabhaṭṭa's *Vijñānabhairava* reads *bhairavarūpadhṛt* (the yogi)—'possesses Bhairava's nature' for *bhairavarūpatā*—'Bhairava nature (is made manifest)'. Thus, the verse with these variants means:

> 'The energy in the form of the vital breath should neither exit nor enter. It unfolds in the centre as the state free of thought. By that (same power the Yogi) possesses Bhairava's nature.'

own innate nature which is the Spanda principle, that is, their foundation, **'by the (one pointed) state free of thought'**. (This is done) with the assembly of the senses that has opened up all at once (*akrama*) because the condition of forming intentions has ceased by the (rubbing together) of the firesticks of the emissions of both (currents of the breath) that have been grasped by blocking (them) on the plane of the centre that pervades simultaneously the states of contemplative absorption with the eyes open and eyes closed. (It is said concerning Bhairavī's seal):

'The goal inside and the vision outside, without opening or closing the eyes—this is Bhairavī's seal (*mudrā*) that immediately bestows that plane (of liberated consciousness).'

When (the yogi) has (in accord with this teaching) entered into Bhairavī's seal, 'the energy in the form of the vital breath' should not flow out externally, nor enter within. By that (power), which is such, that is, Bhairavī's nature, the condition has been made manifest in which exhalation and inhalation has been quelled. (Thus, it is by virtue of that power that) the Yogi possesses Bhairava's nature. These two verses (teach meditations) on the individual plane that rest in the middle abode.

Discussion

Jayaratha quotes verse 26 in the course of commenting on TĀ 5/19cd. Here Abhinava teaches a visualization in which the body and outer limiting adjuncts are burnt away, in order to allow the Goddess of Consciousness to manifest at all levels of her dynamism. It begins with the kindling of the fire in the Heart which is likened to a banana plant. Abhinava writes: 'He who knows the principles of existence (*tattvajña*) sees that (reality) within the Heart, like a flower, the form (of which is like) the (mutually) encapsulated (leaves) of a banana plant (*kadalī*) (wherein all things), both external and internal and (their innermost) core (are gathered together).' (TĀ 5/21)

Jayaratha comments: 'in other words, the practitioner who knows the nature of reality well (seeks) this Supreme Śiva within his Heart. This is like a banana flower within which he is encapsulated by its leaves. Having removed them, one by one, in the end, within the innermost part of the banana flower, he attains Paramaśiva, who is present there like the pollen of the flower. In other words, he has a direct experience of Śiva. As he attains this state, both the

exhaled and inhaled breath (*prāṇa* and *apāna*) of this, the best of practitioners, effortlessly dissolve away into the Middle Abode (between them). In this way, all the principles that enveloped Śiva located in the Heart are simultaneously reduced to ashes in the fire of consciousness. After that the yogi experiences that once all the senses have abandoned their activity, he penetrates (and becomes one) with Śakti's state. It is also said in the *Vijñānabhairava* (v. 26):

'The energy in the form of the vital breath should neither exit nor enter when the centre has unfolded (*vikāsite*) by the (one pointed) state free of thought (that places them there and abides there). (Thus there,) by that (same power, the Yogi's) Bhairava nature (is made manifest).' (26)

In other words, by the power of meditation (*anusaṃdhāna*), free of thought constructs, the centre expands and both the inhaled and the exhaled breath dissolve away. After that the yogi attains Bhairava's nature. One should remember that after experiencing this state, when the yogi rises out of contemplative absorption, the empire of the state of oneness with Śiva persists. As a result, this most excellent practitioner is said to be one who is liberated in this life.'

Further ahead (in TĀv ad 5/22cd-23ab) Jayaratha continues: 'That meditation', namely, the aforementioned union of Moon, Sun and Fire, is 'the fire stick', by means of which,[74] severing the motion of the exhaled and inhaled breath in the proper manner (*samyak*), free of thought constructs, the arousal, which is entry into the Central Abode, (takes place), due to which the fire of the Great Bhairava, burning intensely in the sacrificial hearth of the Heart, by the removal of limitation, 'extends (extensively)'. The meaning is that one's own true nature (*svātman*) is made directly apparent (*sākṣātkāra*) as the full (and supreme) subject.'

To sum up: the fire of Bhairava consciousness is started by rubbing together the two fire sticks of inhalation and exhalation. Once it is burning intensely in the Heart, that is, in the pulsing vital core of consciousness, the yogi must continue to practice even more intensely. He breaths with greater force, and spontaneously retains the breath for longer periods of time, thus impelling it to enter the central channel of *suṣumnā* in between the two breaths. This arouses the Fire further, inflaming it intensely. Thus, the limitations on the fire

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[74] Read *tayā* for *tasyāḥ*.

of individual conditioned subjectivity are removed, by the development of the condition free of thought constructs, of the supreme subjectivity that thus blazes 'intensely inflamed'.

Jayaratha then quotes this meditation from the *Vijñānabhairava* again.

Kṣemarāja comments on SpKā 11 which declares: 'how can one who, as if astonished, beholds his own nature as that which (sustains all things) be subject to this accursed round of transmigration?'

First he quotes refers to this meditation from the *Vijñānabhairava*. Then he goes on to quote the *Kakṣyāstotra* as saying:

'Having cast all the energies of sight and the rest simultaneously everywhere into their own object of perception you alone, whose form is of all things, shines, standing like a pillar of gold, in the centre.'

According to the traditional teachings imparted by the venerable *Vijñānabhairava* and *Kakṣyāstotra*, the assembly of the senses has expanded out all at once with all thought constructs fallen away by virtue of the introverted and extroverted yogic absorption (that rub) together as the firesticks of both emissions (internal and external) grasped by checking the plane in the centre that pervades (both) simultaneously.

'The goal inside and the vision outside, without opening or closing the eyes—this is Bhairavī's seal (*mudrā*) that immediately bestows that plane (of liberated consciousness) that is kept secret in all the Tantras.'

One who has penetrated into Lord Bhairava's Seal that is taught to be such, seeing the immense mass of phenomena that is like a mass of many kinds of reflections that emerge and are submerged within the mirror (of consciousness), although arising there in this way in the Sky of Consciousness, dissolving away all the (lower order of sensory and mental) functions, smashed to pieces suddenly by recognizing one's transcendental nature which is supreme, dense (uninterrupted) bliss never experienced before in thousands of lifetimes. So this Lord of Yogis, as if entered into the seal of Astonishment, by attaining the Great Expansion, whose true and appropriate nature has dawned with great force (*sahasā*) abides (unwavering). But not because (he has) been paralysed, (rather) the odious creation of the series of births and deaths that instils (fear and) trembling in the whole universe has become loose (and no longer binds him in its grip). (Indeed), how can that continue—for the cause which is one's own impurity no longer exists. As is said in the *Mālinīvijayottara*:

'He whose mind abides unmoving in reality, though he enjoys the objects of sense is untouched by (their) defects, like the petals of a lotus by water.'

4) The Tranquility of Breath Retention

कुम्भिता रेचिता वापि पूरिता वा यदा भवेत् ।
तदन्ते शान्तनामासौ शक्त्या शान्तः प्रकाशते ॥ २७ ॥

kumbhitā recitā vāpi pūritā vā yadā bhavet |
tadante śāntanāmāsau śaktyā śāntaḥ prakāśate || 27 ||

If (the power of the vital breath) called 'Tranquil' is retained, whether it has been ejected (in the course of exhalation) or else when filled (in the course of inhalation), in the end of that (practice Sadāśiva,) the Tranquil One, manifests by means of (that same) power. (27)

Word-for-word meaning: *śāntanāmāsau* (if the power of the vital breath) called 'Tranquil' *kumbhitā* is retained *recitā* ejected *vāpi* or else *yadā* when *pūritā bhavet* filled *tadante* in the end of that *śāntaḥ* the Tranquil One *prakāśate* manifests *śaktyā* by means of (that same) power.

Swamijī: 'When you take your breath inside, when it reaches the point of the heart, just stop for a while, and take it out afterwards ... and when it reaches at the point of *dvādaśānta* outside, then stop, just wait; don't take it in again rapidly, just wait.' (Swamijī says the practice here is mild *prāṇāyāma*).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The supreme (transcendent) and other (immanent) nature manifests when the state which is the pure light (of consciousness) dawns. This happens by the experience of tranquility and force (*vega*) like that of a rotating wheel (which does not move in the centre) by engaging in the practice of each one (of the phases of the breathing cycle) having applied breath retention (*kumbhaka*), forced exhalation (*recaka*) and inhalation (*pūraka*) in accord with the path (taught in) the scriptures. (The yogi) abides in this way maintaining a body due to the latent traces (of previous action that continue to be present like) a wheel that has been set spinning. Thus, in the end, the light (of consciousness) alone shines. This has been discussed in the Pratyabhijñā (where it says):

'The perception of objectivity (*idam iti*) is the completion of the purpose of conditioned awareness. Or else repose in one's own innate nature is the reflective awareness that "I am he"'[75]

Śivopādhyāya

If '**power**', in the form of the vital breath, is blocked (*kumbhitā*) once it has been exhaled or, filled externally, is blocked in between (exhalation and inhalation), then when, by practice, the state of tranquil breath retention dawns within it by the cessation of duality, that power '**is called "Tranquil"**'. The supreme innate nature, which is tranquil and transcends name and form manifests, that is to say, it is experienced clearly.

5) The Gradual Ascent of the Energy of the Vital Breath

आमूलात्किरणाभासां सूक्ष्मात् सूक्ष्मतरात्मिकाम् ।
चिन्तयेत्तां द्विषट्कान्ते शाम्यन्तीं भैरवोदयः ॥ २८ ॥

āmūlāt kiraṇābhāsāṃ sūkṣmāt sūkṣmatarātmikām |
cintayet tāṃ dviṣaṭkānte śāmyantīṃ bhairavodayaḥ || 28 ||

One should think that that (energy of the vital breath), shining with rays, (emerges) from the Root, (and becomes gradually) more subtle than the subtle[76] (as it ascends), coming to rest within the End of the Twelve (where) Bhairava awakes. (28)

Word-for-word meaning: *cintayet* one should think *tāṃ* that that (energy of the vital breath) *kiraṇābhāsāṃ* shining with rays *āmūlāt* (emerges) from the Root *sūkṣmāt sūkṣmatarātmikām* (becomes gradually) more subtle than the

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[75] APS v. 15. Ānanda Bhaṭṭa is implying by this citation that the rhythm of the breathing mirrors that of perception. Moving outwards. The outward flow of perception culminates in the domain of objectivity. Its inward return culminates in the self-awareness of the perceiving subject. This is how the yogi breaths, staying in tune with the cycle of perception.

[76] Read with the printed edition of the *Vijñānabhairava sūkṣmāt sūkṣmatarātmikām* for *sūkṣmasūkṣmaparātmikām*. The reading in the printed edition is confirmed by both commentators, Śivopādhyāya and Ānandabhaṭṭa, nonetheless one wonders whether it would not be better to make the simple emendation *sthūlasūkṣmaparātmikām*—'gross, subtle and supreme'.

subtle *śāmyantīṃ* coming to rest *dviṣaṭkānte* within the End of the Twelve *bhairavodayaḥ* (where) Bhairava awakes.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(The energy of the vital breath) shining with (its) rays, '**from the Root**', that is, from the Heart, its nature being to shine, like the lunar and solar orb, it assumes a progressively more subtle state. Thus, having thought of it as more subtle than the subtle, that is, beyond name and form, by the falling away of the form of the object of meditation, although beautiful (*su*) and most subtle, what remains is Bhairava's form. (This takes place) once (the energy of the breath has been) discarded in the course of its coming to rest. This is the sense.

Śivopādhyāya

'**One should think of**', that is, '**meditate on**' '**that**' energy of the vital breath '**from the Root**', that is, from (the genitals)—the Foundation of Birth—up to the End of the Twelve, '**shining with rays**', that is, in the form of rays becoming progressively (more) subtle. How is (the energy of the vital breath)? It is '**coming to rest within the End of the Twelve**'. In this way, even though the form of the object of meditation, generated by the excellence of the meditation, is beautiful (*su*) and most subtle, by (its) falling away, the state of Bhairava's nature (is manifest there).

Discussion

Jayaratha explains the practice and processes set in operation by this meditation by explaining those that take place in the course of attaining the Void of the Self by means of a meditation taught in the *Triśirobhairavatantra* called 'entry into the Supreme Plane of Mantras'.[77] The meditation progresses through a series of ten Voids. The journey from the fifth Void to the seventh takes place in the course of sexual union. The fifth Void, which is the vital force of the breath, surges through the genital centre in a state of arousal rising upwards, becoming progressively more subtle as it does so to be ultimately

[77] TĀ 5/86cd ff.

established in the seventh Void of the climax of passion (*rati*) in its supreme state. Jayaratha explains that:

'(the yogi should contemplate) and utter forth the Emptiness (of the power of the vital breath), residing in the Emptiness (of the sexual centre, which is the Root of Kula, from whence the power of consciousness rises,) by the (mind attentive, and) established in the Emptiness (of passion)'.... This is so because '(established) in Emptiness' means by abiding in passion (*rati*), intent on it (*āsakta*) with an attentive mind (*sāvadhānena cetasā*) (focused on the deity). 'Residing in the Emptiness', which is the Root of Kula, that is, the Foundation of Birth (*janmādhāra*) (i.e., the genitals), which is (essentially) the emergence of the energy (of consciousness) (*śaktyutpatti*), 'he should utter forth the Emptiness' which is the power of the vital breath. (This means that) one should lead it by the process of penetration into the Central Abode to the upper End of the Twelve, in accord with the teaching (of the *Vijñānabhairava*):

'One should think that that (energy of the vital breath), shining with rays, (emerges) from the Root, (and becomes progressively) more subtle than the subtle (as it ascends), coming to rest within the End of the Twelve (where) Bhairava awakes.'

6) The Powerful Radiant Ascent of Kuṇḍalinī

उद्गच्छन्तीं तडिद्रूपां प्रतिचक्रं क्रमात्क्रमम् ।
ऊर्द्ध्वं मुष्टित्रयं यावत् तावदन्ते महोदयः ॥ २९ ॥

udgacchantīṃ taḍidrūpāṃ praticakraṃ kramāt kramam |
ūrddhvaṃ muṣṭitrayaṃ yāvat tāvad ante mahodayaḥ || 29 ||

(Contemplate Kuṇḍalinī, the power of the vital breath) in the form of lightning, ascending through each Wheel, (one after the other) in due order, up to the upper (space spanning the measure of) three clenched fists until, in the end, the Great Awakening! (29)

Word-for-word meaning: *taḍidrūpāṃ* (contemplate Kuṇḍalinī) *udgacchantīṃ* ascending in the form of lightning *praticakraṃ* through each cakra *kramāt kramam* (one after the other) in due order *ūrddhvaṃ* up to the upper *muṣṭitrayaṃ* (space spanning the measure of) three clenched fists *yāvat tāvad* until *ante* at the end; *mahodayaḥ* the Great Awakening.

According to Swami Lakshmanjoo, the ascent of Kuṇḍalinī is in six stages, each of which extends for a measure of twelve fingers (*dvādaśānta*) (i.e. the measure of three clenhced fists) along the length of the body. They are 1) from the Root to the navel, 2) from the navel to the heart, 3) from the heart to the throat, 4) from the throat to between the eyebrows, 5) from between the eyebrows to the Cavity of Brahmā (*brahmarandhra*) on the crown of the head and 6) from the Cavity to Brahmā to the upper End of the Twelve (*dvādaśānta*). In this way there is a span of twelve finger-breadths from centre to centre in the body. The 'upper twelve finger space' is at the end of this series of six Wheels (*cakra*) beginning with the Root Foundation (*mūlādhāra*), followed by those in the navel, heart, throat, middle of the eyebrows, and the Cavity of Brahmā. The Kuṇḍalinī of the Vital Breath (*prāṇakuṇḍalinī*) rises through them progressively with the force and brilliance of a streak of lightning.

Jayaratha associates this progressive ascent with the Yoga of the Measure (*mātrā*). He explains that each Measure marks the progressive elevation of Kuṇḍalinī 'by (its) '(dynamic) state', (as if) enumerating (it) again and again with each recurrence (of the breath), in accord with the practice (taught in *Vijñānabhairava* Verse 29).'[78]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(Contemplate Kuṇḍalinī, the power of the vital breath) blazing with a form similar to (a streak of) lightning, ascending (through each Wheel) beginning with the Root and ending with the Cavity of Brahmā, (one after the other) in due order. (Then) up and, above that, at a distance of (the width of) a fist measuring four finger breadths (Kuṇḍalinī contines to rise) until (it reaches) the twelve-finger (space). At the end (of that which) measures (the width) of three fists **'the Great Awakening'** (dawns). It is the reflective awareness of (the supreme subject free of objectivity experienced as Bhairava's absolute) Ego (*ahaṃ*). The Lord has sung similarly 'I am the source of everything; everything proceedes from me.' Similarly, (it is said) in the Pratyabhijñā also:

'By recognizing that "I am (the one) who possesses this glory (that manifests as all things)", he who is all things is endowed with the Great Lord's state even when thought constructs are spreading forth.'[79]

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[78] TĀv ad 5/88cd-89ab

[79] ĪP 4/1/12. Another more literal translation could be:

Śivopādhyāya

Think of that same power (of the vital breath) '**in the form of lightning**', that is, (as) a blazing, moving light like (a streak of) lightning, '**ascending**', that is, pouring forth '**in due order**' '**through each Wheel**', that is, through the wheels beginning with the Root and ending with the Cavity of Brahmā, until (it reaches) the supreme '**upper twelve finger (space)**' that is, the abode of the End of the Twelve that fills all things. Such is the dawning of the oneness of nature of the Great Bhairava.[80]

7) The Twelve Stations of Ascent

क्रमद्वादशकं सम्यग्द्वादशाक्षरभेदितम् ।
स्थूलसूक्ष्मपरस्थित्या मुक्त्वा मुक्त्वान्ततः शिवः ॥ ३० ॥

kramadvādaśakaṃ samyag dvādaśākṣarabheditam |
sthūlasūkṣmaparasthityā muktvā muktvāntataḥ śivaḥ || 30 ||

The sequence of twelve (centres within the body) is rightly linked to the twelve vowels. Abandoning one after another (their) gross, subtle and supreme states, in the end (the yogi attains) Śiva.[81] (30)

Word-for-word meaning: *kramadvādaśakaṃ* the sequence of twelve *samyag* is rightly *dvādaśākṣarabheditam* linked to the twelve vowels *muktvā mukt-*

'Knowing that "everything is this, my glory", even when the thought constructs of (the Lord), who is the universe, are aflow (His state as) the Great Lord (persists).'

The same verse is quoted by Śivopādhyāya in his commentary on v. 108 (107). The second line is the same in both cases. The first line differs. Here it reads *sarvo mamāyaṃ vibhava ityevaṃ parijānataḥ* |—Knowing that 'everything is this, my glorious outpouring'. This is also the reading in the printed *Īśvarapratyabhijñākārikā*. Below it reads: *so'haṃ mamāyaṃ vibhava iti pratyabhijānataḥ* | Recognizing that "I am (the one) who possesses this glory (that manifests as all things)."

[80] One wonders whether Śivopādhyāya has purposely omitted the higher exegesis Ānandabhaṭṭa advances to align the teachings of the *Vijñānabhairava* with that of the Pratyabhijñā. If so has done that simply not to be repetitive or because he does not see the Śiva/Bhairava consciousness at the summit of the ascent of Kuṇḍalinī to be supreme dynamic subjectivity.

[81] *Cf. Below, verse 33.*

vāntataḥ abandoning one after the other (their) *sthūlasūkṣmaparasthityā* gross, subtle and supreme states, *antataḥ* in the end *śivaḥ* (the yogi attains) Śiva.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The group of twelve wheels are well known by the names of their location. (They are): 1) the tip of (the place of) birth, 2) the Root, 3) the Bulb, 4) the naval, 5) the heart, 6) the throat, 7) the palate, 8) the centre between the eyebrows, 9) the forehead, 10) the Cavity (of Brahmā), 11) Power and 12) the one called Pervasive (*vyāpinī*). That (series) becomes clear initially by visualization (*dhyāna*). Then, after that, it pulsates and then assumes the form of (pinpoints of) light, which are said to be (their) subtle and supreme (form) (respectively). Moreover, it is with that name that Śiva who makes (all things) manifest everywhere because he conquers (and so excels) all, shines as He truly is.

Śivopādhyāya

1) The tip of (the place of) birth, 2) the Root, 3) the Bulb, 4) the naval, 5) the heart, 6) the throat, 7) the palate, 8) the centre between the eyebrows, 9) the forehead, 10) the Cavity of Brahmā, 11) Power and 12) the one called Pervasive (*vyāpinī*) (together constitute) the group of twelve processes (*krama*) and wheels. They are connected progressively with Unstruck Sound that has the 'crooked form' (*kuṭilākṛti*) (of Kuṇḍalinī). That group of twelve is properly successively coloured with twelve phonemes beginning with A and ending with *visarga*. They are the twelve vowels without the 'neuters' (ṛ ṝ ḷ ḹ). Each one (may be) in (its) innate, mobile or enflamed (state). This being so, first the visualized (form) (*dhyāna*) is made clear, then the pulsating ones and after that it assumes the form of (pin points of) light. (In this way the group) is said to be gross, subtle and supreme. Thus, abandoned one after another the sequence of locations on (this) ladder and, finally having given it up entirely, in the end (one attains) Paramaśiva's state (*bhāva*).

Now, he talks about the Seal of the Skyfaring Goddess (*khecarīmudrā*):

8) The Ascent of the Breath through the Valve Between the Eyebrows

तयापूर्याशु मूर्धान्तं भङ्क्त्वा भ्रूक्षेपसेतुना ।
निर्विकल्पं मनः कृत्वा सर्वोर्ध्वे सर्वगोद्गमः ॥ ३१ ॥

that passes through the wheels beginning with (the one in the place) of birth and so too (in the same way) that same End of the Twelve by means of the dam (formed by) the arched the eyebrows, that is, by the process of piercing through the (centre between) the eyebrows. (This is achieved) once blocked, with the method taught by the teacher, as with a dam, (the mind) that flows (like) water and then after that '**freed the mind from thought**' the all-pervasive one (emerges) in the supreme space '**above all (things)**', even the End of the Twelve.

9) Meditating on Five Voids of the Senses and the Void of the Heart

शिखिपक्षैश्चित्ररूपैर्मण्डलैः शून्यपञ्चकम् ।
ध्यायतोऽनुत्तरे शून्ये प्रवेशो हृदये भवेत् ॥ ३२ ॥

śikhipakṣaiś citrarūpair maṇḍalaiḥ śūnyapañcakam |
dhyāyato'nuttare śūnye praveśo hṛdaye bhavet || 32 ||

Meditating on the five voids (of the senses)[84] by means of the spheres (of the senses), variegated in form (like) the feathers of a peacock, (the yogi) enters into the most excellent (*anuttara*) Void within the Heart (of consciousness). (32)

Word-for-word meaning: *dhyāyato* meditating on *śūnyapañcakam* the five voids (of the senses) *maṇḍalaiḥ* by means of spheres (of the senses), *citrarūpair* variegated in form (like) *śikhipakṣaiś* the feathers of a peacock *praveśo bhavet* (the yogi) enters into *anuttare* the most excellent *śūnye* Void *hṛdaye* within the Heart.

Swamijī (2002: 33) explains: 'when the five-fold organs are directed to their own objects, think that the object is perceived by the eye, the ear, the nose or the skin—by touch or the tongue, and you must know that all these objects are only *śūnya*, void. There is nothing in it. It is only void; all these objects are void, without allowing your consciousness to be affected by these objects. You must concentrate simultaneously on these five and realize that it is void and nothing else. You have to concentrate forcibly that these objects are nothing. What appears to me is nothing. The sensation of what I hear, see, touch, taste

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[84] See TĀ ad 5/27cd-28ab, note 54: concerning the Voids of the senses.

and smell is nothing. It is only *śūnya*. There is no *cittavṛtti* [mental activity] or *pratyāhāra*, which means to withdraw [from the objects of the senses]. It is not withdrawing. It is drawing out. Keep it out and perceive it as nothing.' 'The Five Voids are also the five states of consciousness.' 'The totality of universality is to feel the universal *svarūpa* everywhere. That is universal.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

"This Void consists of the spheres of the senses, shining like a picture with the variegated forms of many colours of the feathers, that is, the tail feathers, of a peacock." Meditating in this way one certainly (gains) entry, that is, the supreme path (*gati*), within the Void, which is the most excellent (*anuttara*) and supreme abode. This (variegated cosmic) picture is (just a figment of the imagination) like a city of celestial musicians. By (cultivating this) certainty one attains ultimate reality (*paramārthasiddhi*).

Śivopādhyāya

Peacock feathers (are symbols of the senses) because (they are) the foundation of their (multiple colours and shapes, just as the senses are of perceptions). This is (also) because the eyes of the peacock's tail, shining on the inside and the outside with (their) variegated circular forms (and colours) (*śūnyarūpa*), are similar (to the variety of sensations with which the senses shine, their nature void—*śūnyarūpa*).[85] (They are also similar) because of the similarity of the five circles (*śūnya*) (on each feather) above, below, in the middle and on the two sides with the voidness within the five senses or in the Heart. By meditating on (these Five Voids, the yogi) penetrates into the Supreme Sky.

If we accept the reading *śikhipakṣacitrarūpair* in place of *śikhipakṣaiś citrarūpair* the meaning is (as follows). The spheres of the senses, are 'varie-

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[85] The word '*śūnya*' not only means 'void', it also means means 'circle' and 'zero'. There are five circles—*śūnya*—on a peacock's feather. Similarly there are five voids—*śūnya*—which are the domains through which the sensory activity of the senses unfolds. This meditation involves cultivating the non-conceptual awareness that it is inherently impossible to perceive objects independently of the sensations that are registered by the senses. Thus, in a way, they have no objects. The energies of the senses unfold in emptiness.

gated in form' like the feathers of a peacock because, by perceiving form and taste etc., they are spheres with many forms. (These spheres—*maṇḍala*) are like this because they give (*lānti*) 'spirituous liquor' (*maṇḍa*), that is, the essence of the juice (of aesthetic delight). (The yogi experiences) entry, that is, complete penetration (*samāveśa*) into '**the most excellent (*anuttara*) Void**', which is Bhairava's nature, by meditating by means of them on the five objects of sense, that is, sound and the rest. (These are) Five Voids because, as (mere) sensation (their outer objects remain) unmanifest and hence are Void by nature.

10) The Dissolving away of Attentive Thought

ईदृशेन क्रमेणैव यत्र कुत्रापि चिन्तना ।
शून्ये कुड्ये परे पात्रे स्वयं लीना वरप्रदा ॥ ३३ ॥

īdṛśena krameṇaiva yatra kutrāpi cintanā |
śūnye kuḍye pare pātre svayaṃ līnā varapradā || 33 ||

Wherever (one's attentive) thought (*cintanā*) (settles) by this same process,[86] be it in an empty space, on a wall, (or) on a worthy disciple, it spontaneously dissolves away and (so) bestows the boon (of pure consciousness). (33)

Word-for-word meaning: *yatra kutrāpi* wherever *cintanā* (one's attentive) thought *īdṛśena* (settles) by this same *krameṇaiva* process *śūnye* (be it) an empty space *kuḍye* on a wall *pare pātre* on a worthy disciple *svayaṃ līnā* it spontaneously dissolves away *varapradā* (and so) bestows the boon (of pure consciousness).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Meditating by this same process within somebody else or within one's self or else elsewhere such as '**on a wall**' **or** '**on a worthy disciple**', when one has attained a state of one-pointed and stable contemplation (*bhāvanā*), the power of the breath '**spontaneously dissolves away**'. (Then the yogi) considers himself to be the oneness which is the essential nature of subjectivity (*ahaṃrūpatādātmyābhimāna*) there, wherever it may be, by the oneness of

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[86] See above verse 32. Ānandabhaṭṭa's version of the *Vijñānabhairava* reads *yatra yatrāpi cintayet* for *yatra kutrāpi cintanā*.

(his) reflective awareness of the supreme plane (of existence). This is the meaning. And the same is taught in the venerable Spanda (teachings):

'Everything arises (out of) the individual soul, and so he is all things because he perceives his identity with the awareness (he has) of them. Therefore, there is no state in the thoughts of words or their meanings that is not Śiva. It is the enjoyer alone who always and everywhere abides as the object of enjoyment. Or, constantly attentive, and perceiving the entire world as play, he who has this awareness (*saṃvitti*) is undoubtedly liberated in this very life.'[87]

Śivopādhyāya

'By this same process' of crossing over (to higher levels) by abandoning (lower levels) and taking up (the higher ones in the series beginning with) 1) the foundation of the anus, 2) (the place of) birth, 3) the Bulb, 4) the navel, 5) the heart, 6) the throat, 7) the palate, 8) the centre between the eyebrows, 9) the forehead, 10) the Cavity of Brahmā, 11) Power and, finally, 12) the one called Pervasive (*vyāpinī*).[88] **'Wherever thought,'** that is, recollection (*smaraṇa*) (settles), be it of one's own Self or elsewhere, that is, (on someone else) like one's own Self, or else in the emptiness of a castle, a vessel and the like, or else **'on a worthy disciple'**, that is, a disciple with a pure mind and the like, **'it spontaneously dissolves away'**. (This takes place) by the strength of the reflective awareness of the most profound meditation during the ascent through the sequence of the twelve (places) within one's own body. And once dissolved away, (its) recollection (*smṛti*) **'bestows the boon (of pure consciousness)'**. As is said:

'Taking the support of the all-transcendent nature by the sequence of stages on the ladder (of ascent), in the end, when a state of stability within the supreme reality has been achieved, (the yogi's) state of being is that of Śiva.'

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[87] SpKā 28–30 also quoted below by Ānandabhaṭṭa in the commentary on v 116 (114).

[88] Cf. Above verse 30 and commentaries. Note that the commentators explain that this process of ascent progresses to the degree in which objectivity is experienced to be one with the subjectivity that perceives it. Ultimately, at the climax of the ascent, the individual identifies with the oneness of the two in the fullness of the awareness of complete all-embracing subjectivity. In other words, the practice here is understood by them to a process of strengthening of self-awareness. The phases of ascent mark the degrees of the intensity of this self-awareness that absorbs objectivity developing as the yogi exercises it.

tayāpūryāśu mūrdhāntaṃ bhaṅktvā bhrūkṣepasetunā |
nirvikalpaṃ manaḥ kṛtvā sarvordhve sarvagodgamaḥ || 31 ||

Having quickly filled (the body up to the Cavity of Brahmā) at the summit of the head with that (same energy of the vital breath) and blocked (the flow of the mind and breath) with the dam (formed by) arching the eyebrows,[82]

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[82] This rather forced translation follows the forced explanation given by both the commentators and Swamijī. The problem lies with the expression *bhaṅktvā bhrūkṣepasetunā*. '*Bhrūkṣepa*' literally means 'casting the eyebrows' with the intended sense of knitting them together when one is angry and looks threateningly at the person with whom one is angry. Deities and Siddhas, especially Buddhist ones, are often depicted with this fierce expression. In their case the enemy is fettered Karmic existence.

The rest of the meditation is clear enough. The force of the vital breath fills the body up to the top of the head. The commentators call this place the End of the Twelve. The Cavity of Brahmā is often called the End of the Twelve. The context warrants that we understand that this way here. This stills the mind and omnipresent divine consciousness, otherwise obscured by its thought constructs, emerges.

Now the word '*setu*' most commonly means a bridge. However, here it is understood to mean a dam. The word *bhaṅktvā* means 'having broken through' or 'smashed apart'. But here in order to make its meaning fit with the understanding of the word *setu*, it is understood to mean 'having blocked'. This does not seem to make much sense. What is being blocked? Surely not the upward moving breath for it is meant to reach the top of the head. Perhaps the blockage is intended to prevent it falling back down. But then one wonders how it got beyond the bridge of the nose where it normally turns down to exit through the nose.

If we retain the immediate sense of the words, the meaning would be 'having broken through by means of the bridge formed by arching the eyebrows.' This, it seems to me, makes better sense. The ascent of the exhaled breath (*prāṇa*), normally blocked at the bridge of the nose, pierces through it by arching the eyebrows. One could add that this implies doing so with a sense of intense determination and force, as when one attacks an enemy with rage.

Combining the two meanings of the word *setu*—'bridge' and 'dam'—we arrive at a third which is probably the best. This is 'valve'. The vital breath pierces upwards breaking through the blockage between the eyebrows that normally deflects the breath down and out through the nose. Once the breath has broken through the 'valve-bridge-dam', it closes again so that it does not fall back continuing up instead to the top of the head. From there the vital breath can leave the physical body, carrying with it the individual soul that thus has a chance to merge

having (thus) freed the mind of thought,[83] the omnipresent one emerges above all (things). (31)

Word-for-word meaning: *āpūryāśu* having quickly filled (the body up to the Cavity of Brahmā) *mūrdhāntaṃ* at the summit of the head *tayā* with that (same energy of the vital breath and) *bhaṅktvā* blocked (the flow of the mind and the breath) *bhrūkṣepasetunā* with the dam (formed by) arching the eyebrows *kṛtvā nirvikalpaṃ manaḥ* having freed the mind of thoughts *sarvagodgamaḥ* the omnipresent one emerges *sarvordhve* above all things.

Swamijī talks about the blocking of the breath between the eyebrows by concentration. The commentators only refer to blocking the activity of the mind there. He says: '... when you put one-pointedness between the two eyebrows, while you are moving your breath inside and outside—then what happens?—by putting your one-pointedness between these two eyebrows, *mūrdhāntam āpūrya*, you fill your whole body up to the *brahmarandhra* with this breath, and *bhaṅktvā*, after doing that, the movement of *prāṇaśakti* is suspended, suspended for that time being.... then you must see that your mind becomes absolutely unminded.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having filled '**the summit of the head**', that is, the End of the Twelve with the vital breath (by rising) progressively to ever higher (levels) through the wheels beginning with that of birth. Having blocked the mind, that flows (like) water, by arching the eyebrows like a dam, and (so by) having made it abandon (its) fickleness, '**freed the mind from thought**', the all-pervasive one (emerges) in the supreme space '**above all (things)**', at the End of the Twelve.

Śivopādhyāya

Having filled (everything) up to '**the summit of the head**', that is, the End of the Twelve, with the power called the vital breath, which is the Half Moon

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in the Sky of Consciousness beyond in the End of the Twelve above the head which is the highest extremity of the subtle body.

[83] Abandoning, transcending, ignoring and dissolving away the mind (*cittalaya*) and freeing it from thought constructs is taught as part of the practice of several meditations. *Cittalaya* is taught in *dhāraṇās* 112 (111), and 115 (113).

Assuming the variant reading *cintanāt* 'by the (attentive) thought' (we arrive at another meaning, which is as follows). By reversing the aforementioned power of the vital breath so that the beginning is the end, the power of the breath should be followed as (jumping from one place to the next like) the leaping of a frog. Thus by (that attentive) thought, that is, for that reason, the power of the vital breath having spontaneously dissolved away within the (inner) void or else in the external wall or the like, **'bestows the boon (of pure consciousness)'**. This is the prose order. The overall sense is that one should think of the sequence of twelve (stages of the ascent of) the power of the vital breath in the outer empty wall and the like also as if (it were) within one's own body.

11) Placing the Mind in the Space within the Skull

कपालान्तर्मनो न्यस्य तिष्ठन्मीलितलोचनः ।
क्रमेण मनसो दाढ्र्यात् लक्षयेल्लक्ष्यमुत्तमम् ॥ ३४ ॥

kapālāntar mano nyasya tiṣṭhan mīlitalocanaḥ |
krameṇa manaso dārḍhyāt lakṣayel lakṣyam uttamam || 34 ||

Having placed the mind within (the space of the) skull, abiding (motionless) with the eyes closed, by the progressively (increasing) stability of the mind, one perceives the supreme goal. (34)

Word-for-word meaning: *nyasya* having placed *mano* the mind *kapālāntar* within (the space of the) skull *tiṣṭhan* abiding (motionless) *mīlitalocanaḥ* with the eyes closed *krameṇa* by the progressively *dārḍhyāt* (increasing) stability *manaso* of the mind *lakṣayel* one perceives *uttamam* the supreme *lakṣyam* goal.

Swamijī: 'you must see that there is fire shining all around, in your *kapāla*, in that skull. In the vacuum of the skull, there is a fire going on, shining, flaming, flames of fire.' 'There is the fire of *cit*-consciousness that is produced in *ūrdhva kuṇḍalinī, dhāman* of *cit kuṇḍalinī*.[89]

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[89] This literally means [in the abode of the Kuṇḍalinī of consciousness within the abode of the upper Kuṇḍalinī.' There are two Kuṇḍalinīs or aspects of the same one. One is the lower (*adhaḥ*) Kuṇḍalinī and the other the upper (*ūrdhva*). The former is in the body of the individual soul. The later is within Śiva.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(The yogi) should perceive the object of attention '**within (the space of the) skull**', that is, in the middle of the cavity within the head '**with the eyes closed**', that is, with the outer and inner senses inwardly contracted into the heart etc. by the cessation of the movement of exhalation and inhalation etc. (that takes place) within *suṣumnā*. By virtue of the stability of that (meditation) he sees the most excellent Light as directly as when (one sees something and perceives that) 'this is a jar'.

Śivopādhyāya

'**Having placed the mind**' within the inner cavity, that is, in the middle of the skull in the head and achieved fixity, meditation and contemplative absorption within (their) support, that is, the radiance (*jyotiṣ*), luminous with its own light located in the cavity of the skull. Abiding with (his) eyes closed, he perceives the most excellent object of attention in accord with teaching (of the *Yogasūtra* that states) 'the vision of Siddhas is had in the radiance within the head'.[90] Or else (one can understand the practice in another way).

'The supreme power is (denoted) by the word '*ka*' (sky) and (the word) *pālaka* ('the protector') is a name of Śiva. (Thus, the word) *kapāla* (skull) is said to be the union of Śiva and Śakti.'

In accord with practice (taught in) the *Tantrakośa* within skull, that is, in the middle of one's own nature which is the Light (of consciousness) and reflective awareness. In accord with the teaching that 'his energies are the entire universe and the possessor of (these) energies is the Great Lord' all the universe is made of Śiva and Śakti. '**Having placed the mind**' in (this) object of awareness, '**the eyes closed**', he sees the most excellent object of attention. This is the meaning.[91]

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[90] YSū 3/31

[91] A procedure called *tūrayāga*—'the sacrifice performed on a skull', that is, the invocation, installation and worship of deities on a skull, is taught in the *Brahmayāmala* and the related *Piṅgalāmata* which dedicates a long section on the iconometry of idols to be erected in cremation grounds and their worship. Like the Sacrifice of the Skull, this is not a subject commonly discussed in the

12) The Middle Channel, the Inner Void and the Goddess

मध्यनाडी मध्यसंस्था बिससूत्राभरूपया ।
ध्यातान्तर्व्योमया देव्या तया देवः प्रकाशते ॥ ३५ ॥

madhyanāḍī madhyasaṃsthā bisasūtrābharūpayā |
dhyātāntarvyomayā devyā tayā devaḥ prakāśate || 35 ||

The Middle Channel is situated in the middle[92] (between the two breaths) in (an extremely subtle) form like a lotus fibre. Having meditated on that as the Goddess Who is the inner Void, the God is illumined by Her. (35)

Word-for-word meaning: *madhyanāḍī* the Middle Channel *madhyasaṃsthā* is situated in the middle *bisasūtrābharūpayā* in the form of a lotus fibre *dhyātāntarvyomayā* having meditated on the inner Void *devyā* as the Goddess *devaḥ* the God *prakāśate* is illumined *tayā* by her.

Śaiva Tantras. Kiss (2015: 318) reports that chapter four of the *Brahmayāmala* from verse 338 to the end deals with a 'description of ritual objects such as *ḍamarus* [double headed hand drums], *kapālas* [skulls], *khatvāṅgas* [swords] and a section on image installation (*pratiṣṭhā*). Verses 740 to 779 deal with the characteristics of a skull (*kapālalakṣaṇa*).'

Embellishing skulls with silver, gold, and precious stones to use for ritual purposes is common practice in the Buddhist Yoga and Anuttarayoga Tantras, but not those of the (mostly chronologically earlier) Kriyā and Caryā Tantras. The transition from the first two to the second two types is marked by a strongly developed presence of a common cremation ground culture and their influence on one another, especially the Śaivism of the more 'extreme' Bhairava Tantras on the ritual and iconic paradigms of their Buddhist counterparts. In these kind of Tantras, a skull is commonly used as a sacrificial vessel (*pātra*) and deity is commonly worshipped in it. As this is a major feature of the cult of the *Brahmayāmala*, it can be said to be '*kāpālika*'. We may say the same about similar Buddhist Tantric cults. Naturally, a skull is normally considered to be a very impure object, although not so when part of a living body.

Finally we note that Abhinavagupta refers to the practice of engraving the seed syllable Mantras of goddesses on a skull and worshipping them there (see TĀ 27/20cd ff). He refers to the Trika *Siddhayogeśvarīmata* as his authority for this. However, neither the passage nor the practice can be traced to the extant recension of the *Siddhayogeśvarīmata*.

[92] This verse is quoted in TĀv ad 1/85cd where *madhyasaṃsthā* reads *madhyasaṃstha-*.

Swamijī: The Middle Channel is contemplated by the Middle Channel itself. Individual body consciousness cannot reach that state. 'That state of consciousness is realized by that consciousness of that state' which is that supreme subjectivity.[93]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The inner Void of (the Middle Channel) is characterized as more subtle than a lotus fibre. Contemplating that, the Void (transcendental) nature of Bhairavī who is just like that, is contemplated (in the oneness of the Void). This being so, the God who is His own Light 'is illumined' as just pure perception alone (*dṛṣṭimātra*). This is the sense. And it has been explained at length in the Spanda (teachings) in this and the following (verses):

'Then in that great sky, when the Sun (of exhalation) and the Moon (of inhalation) dissolve away, the dull minded (yogi is cast down) into a state like deep sleep, however the awakened (always) remains lucid.'[94]

Śivopādhyāya

'**The Middle Channel**' is called '*suṣumnā*'. It is '**situated in the middle**', that is, in the middle of the Heart. This is the (prose) syntax (between the words). '**Having meditated on**' that as being like a lotus fibre because it is extremely subtle, that is, having thought of the inner Sky which is the Sky of consciousness within it, God is illumined by the goddess who is such. Within the Middle Channel there is a Void which is the inner Sky of consciousness. The energy of the vital breath flows forth from that. By (cultivating this) awareness, the Light is produced (*prādurbhāva*). Or else (another explanation is that) the first line can be read either as 'the Middle Channel is situated in the middle and its form is like a lotus fibre' or else as 'the Middle Channel is in the form of lotus

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[93] The Middle Channel is *suṣumnā* (also, occasionally spelt correctly—*suṣumṇā*). Extremely subtle, it is commonly said to be as fine as a lotus fibre. A line without thickness, like the Point (*bindu*) without size, it marks the boundary between the finite body and the infinite expanse of transcendental consciousness and so represents the Deity or the state of the supreme perceiver (*parapramātṛbhāva*). Not an object, it can only be known by its own inherent power of self-awareness.

[94] SpKā 25 also quoted below by Ānandabhaṭṭa in his commentary on v 50 (49).

fibre that is in the middle.' This (i.e. *madhyanāḍī*) is a type of compound in which both parts (i.e. *madhya* and *nāḍī*) can be the adjective (qualifying the other part). '**God is illumined**' by that power of the vital breath, which is like this. He is the Sky which is contemplated (*cintita*) in the middle of it.

Discussion

In the course of commenting on a meditation taught in the *Triśirobhairava-tantra* (TĀ 1/85cd (86ab)) Jayaratha explains this meditation which he quotes at the conclusion of his explanation.

'The '**upper**' is the exhaled breath (*prāṇa*), (so called) because it transports upwards. The '**lower**' is the inhaled breath (*apāna*), (so called) because it transports downwards. '**Having abandoned**', that is, interrupted that movement (*tadgati*),[95] '**he**' ... '**should enter**' the Middle Channel. How is he? He '**resides in the middle place**'. The energy located there in the middle of the Middle Channel has the (extremely subtle) form of a lotus fibre and the place of that (energy) is just one (*ekadeśa*), that is, the inner Void (*antarvyoman*). That (is the place in which the yogi resides and) to which he goes, that is, knows, and he is established there with one pointed determination.'[96] That is said (in the *Vijñānabhairava*).'

13) Piercing between the Eyes, the Vision of Light and the Void in the centre

कररुद्धदृगस्त्रेण भ्रूमेदाद्द्वाररोधनात् ।
दृष्टे बिन्दौ क्रमाल्लीने तन्मध्ये परमा स्थितिः ॥ ३६ ॥

kararuddhadṛgastreṇa bhrūbhedād dvārarodhanāt |
dṛṣṭe bindau kramāl līne tanmadhye paramā sthitiḥ || 36 ||

By closing the doors (of the senses) with the weapon, that is, blocking (their) perception with the hands, and by piercing (the centre between) the eyebrows, when the Point (*bindu*) (of light) is perceived and gradually dis-

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[95] One could also translate *tadgatiḥ* as 'that condition' i.e., the state of the breath in which it flows up and down.

[96] Read *iti* for *itī*. TĀv ad 1/85cd

solves away, (the yogi attains) the supreme state in the centre (of the Void of consciousness). (36)

Word-for-word meaning: *dvārarodhanāt* closing the doors (of the senses) *kararuddhadṛgastreṇa* with the weapon, that is, by blocking (their) perception with the hands *bhrūbhedād* and by piercing (the centre) the eyebrows *dṛṣṭe bindau* when the Point (of light) is perceived *kramāl line* and gradually dissolves away (the yogi attains the) *paramā* supreme *sthitiḥ* state *tanmadhye* in the centre of that.

Swamijī: Piercing means just contemplating between the two eyebrows, after you close all the openings of your head by your hands.' Bindu is *Tārakaprakāśa* (the Light of a Star)—contemplating it, it gradually fades away. When it has faded away completely you are in the state of Paramaśiva.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The cavities of the face, indicated (by the word) '**perception**' blocked by the two hands so that by tearing apart the knot in between the eyebrows of that kind of yogi '**when the Point (of light) is perceived**', by the excellence (of his) concentration. '**It gradually dissolves away**' (and he attains) '**the supreme state in the centre (of the Void of consciousness)**'. The meaning is that Parabhairava manifests.

Śivopādhyāya

The cavities of the face, indicated (by the word) '**perception**' blocked by the two hands, in due order (beginning) with the thumb (then) the index finger and so on. By tearing apart the knot in between the eyebrows with the kind of weapon a yogi possesses, '**when the Point (of light) is perceived**', by the excellence (of his) concentration, '**it gradually dissolves away**' **in the centre**' of the Void of consciousness and '**the supreme state**' of this yogi (is attained) which is the manifestation of Bhairava. This is the meaning.

The prose order (and connected sense) is as follows. The closing, that is, slamming shut of the doors (of the senses) by means of the instrument which is the weapon of perception blocked by the hands causes the piercing (of the centre between) the eyebrows due to which there is a vision of the Point (*bindu*) (of light). Or else (one can understand the verse to mean the follow-

ing). 'The door' is the Door of Brahmā (located at the summit of the head), its blockage and slamming shut is brought about by the centre between the eyebrows. Due to that, the knot in between the eyebrows is torn apart resulting in a vision of supreme consciousness. Or else, (another explanation results by taking the participle—*ruddha*—to be an action noun—*rodhana*) in the ablative 'by blocking' (*rodhanāt*). (In this way we arrive at the meaning) 'once blocked all the doors (of the senses, the yogi experiences) the light of consciousness by tearing apart the knot in between the eyebrows.'

14) Pressing the Eyes and the dissolving away of the flame between the Eyebrows

धामान्तः क्षोभसंभूतसूक्ष्माग्नितिलकाकृतिम् ।
बिन्दुं शिखान्ते हृदये लयान्ते ध्यायतो लयः ॥ ३७ ॥

dhāmāntaḥkṣobhasaṃbhūtasūkṣmāgnitilakākṛtim |
binduṃ śikhānte hṛdaye layānte dhyāyato layaḥ || 37 ||

A Point (of light) in the form of a subtle line (*tilaka*) of fire (between the eyebrows) arises by the inner agitation of (the eyeballs,) the abode (*dhāman*) (of sight). When it has dissolved away whilst meditating (on it) (within the upper End of the Twelve-finger Space) in the extremity of the topknot and within the heart, (the mind) dissolves away. (37)

Word-for-word meaning: *binduṃ* a Point (of light) *sūkṣmāgnitilakākṛtim* in the form of a subtle line (*tilaka*) of fire—*saṃbhūta*—arises—*antaḥkṣobha*—by the inner agitation of (the eyeballs) *dhāma-* the abode (of sight). *layānte* When it has dissolved away *dhyāyato* whilst meditating (on it) *śikhānte* in the extremity of the topknot *hṛdaye* and within the heart *layaḥ* (the mind) dissolves away.

Swamijī: According to Swamijī this meditation teaches the yogi that he should meditate on both the Heart and the End of the Twelve simultaneously independently of the breath.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(The Point) arises by the inner agitation, that is, by pressing (the eyeball) very hard, which is 'the abode' of the radiant energy present in the eyes. Or else,

(another meaning is that) within a light or the like, made of radiant energy, when the time comes that it is almost extinguished, the arousal, which is (its) fickle motion that arises from that 'in the form of a subtle line (*tilaka*) of fire' is the Point. **'Whilst meditating (on it)' 'in the extremity of the topknot'**, that is, in the End of the Twelve and in the Heart, (its light) dissolves away and, as it ceases, oneness emerges. The meaning is that thought ceases and at the end of that (process the yogi's) contemplation penetrates into the reality which is the supreme radiant energy (of the deity's consciousness). This is the meaning.

Śivopādhyāya

By the inner agitation (of the eyeballs), that is, by pressing (them) very hard, **'the abode'** of the radiant energy (of consciousness) present in the eyes, (called) the Point, which is (made of) the rays of sight, arises (between the eyebrows) in the form of a subtle line (*tilaka*) of fire. Whilst meditating on it in the End of the Twelve and in the Heart, **'at the end of (its) dissolving away'**, that is, at the very end when thought has fallen away, (the yogi's) contemplation penetrates into the reality which is the supreme radiant energy (of the deity's consciousness).

Or else (one can understand) 'abode' (*dhāman*) to mean the radiant energy of a lamp or the like, at the end of which, when the time has come for it to go out, from the disturbance, which is its fickle flicker, arises a Point (of light) **'in the form of a subtle line (*tilaka*) of fire'** as (the yogi) meditates on the extremity of the topknot etc. (where it comes to an end).

15) The Brahman of Sound in the Cavity of the Ear

अनाहते पात्रकर्णेऽभग्नशब्दे सरिद्द्रुते ।
शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति ॥ ३८ ॥

anāhate pātrakarṇe 'bhagnaśabde sariddrute |
śabdabrahmaṇi niṣṇātaḥ paraṃ brahmādhigacchati || 38 ||

He attains the Supreme Brahman who is deeply merged into the Brahman that is sound (*śabdabrahman*). It is the Unstruck Sound (perceived) within the cavity of the ear (that is like) the uninterrupted sound of a fast-flowing river.[97] (38)

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[97] The practice taught here is quite easy. It simply involves grasping the head with

Word-for-word meaning: *paraṃ brahmādhigacchati* (He) attains the Supreme Brahman *niṣṇātaḥ* (who is) deeply merged *śabdabrahmaṇi* into the Brahman that is sound. *anāhate* (It is) the Unstruck Sound (perceived) *pātrakarṇe* within the cavity of the ear, *abhagnaśabde* (that is like) the uninterrupted sound *sariddrute* (of) a fast-flowing river.

Swamijī sees two alternative places on which to meditate. One is Unstruck Sound and the other is the sound of running water. However, both commentators understand the later to be an adjective of the former.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The Brahman that is Sound is characterized as being of ten kinds.[98] The Supreme Brahman is attained by being well established there (within it). This Sound arises in some (inscrutable) way that is not associated (*āhata*), that is, pervaded by (sensations) such as (the colour) blue and the like that unfold externally. Thus it is not (just a common sound that resonates) in the cavity of the ear because (this Unstruck Sound) differs from gross sound and the like.[99] Thus, it is an '**uninterrupted sound**'. It is the sound within Unstruck

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the hands and plugging the ears with the thumbs. One then hears in the ear a sound like that of running water. One hears a similar sound by holding a conch to an ear. Although the sound is practically the same, this one is said to be like the ebb and flow of water on the shore of the sea.

[98] As the yogi goes on paying attention to the sound in his ears, it gradually changes to as many as ten different ones. These sounds arise in succession as the meditation develops. The last sound fades away into pure absolute consciousness. Concerning the ten types or levels of Unstruck Sound, see TĀ 5/98–100 (97cd-100ab) and commentary.

[99] The meaning of *āhata* means 'struck' or 'beaten'. Accordingly, the inner sound yogis hear that is not produced by striking together two objects is called *anāhatanāda*—Unstruck Sound. Ānandabhaṭṭa takes this 'striking' to refer to the contact between outer objects in general as well as the striking of the breath in the loci of articulation that produces phonemic sounds and hence spoken language. This does not take place on this higher level of consciousness in which objects share in the pervasive, unconditioned quality of consciousness. Here, as in many other instances, perception is understood on the analogy of sound. Accordingly, Unstruck Sound is the reflective awareness of consciousness, which is understood to be the quintessence of language.

Sound which is the Brahman that is Sound, the venerable Lord of Sound (*nādabhaṭṭāraka*). (The sound is like) '**a fast-flowing river**', that is, a powerful uninterrupted torrent (of water). The one (whose attention) is firmly fixed there attains the state of the Brahman. This is the sense (of this verse).

Śivopādhyāya

(The sound) that is in the cavity of the ear that some perceive inwardly, but is not such as (outer sound), is actually the resonance of Unstruck Sound. Adepts hear it within the same cavity of the ear (resounding like) '**a fast-flowing river**', that is, a powerful torrent (of water). Or else, if we accept the reading *pariśrute*—'heard all around' (for *sariddrute*—'a fast-flowing river'), the meaning is that it comes forth all around (*paritaḥ*), in every place and enters the domain of hearing. (It is an) uninterrupted sound, that is, it resounds without a break, night and day. It is Unstruck (because) it is not (sound produced by) anybody striking (objects together). (Rather), it arises by itself (spontaneously). He who is 'deeply merged' 'in the Brahman that is Sound', the venerable Lord of Sound (*nādabhaṭṭāraka*), and has accomplished (the phases of yoga of) sustained attention (*dhāraṇā*), visualization (*dhyāna*) and contemplative absorption (*samādhi*), attains the Supreme Brahman. This is the meaning. By a one-pointed mind focused on the unbroken resonance of Unstruck Sound, the essential nature of the Supreme Sky (of consciousness) arises.[100]

16) The Extremity of the Resonance of Praṇava

प्रणवादिसमुच्चारात्प्लुतान्ते शून्यभावनात् ।
शून्यया परया शक्त्या शून्यतामेति भैरवि ॥ ३९ ॥

praṇavādisamuccārāt plutānte śūnyabhāvanāt |
śūnyayā parayā śaktyā śūnyatām eti bhairavi || 39 ||

O Bhairavī, by uttering a *praṇava* or the like and by meditating on the Void at the end of (its) prolated sound, (the yogi) attains Emptiness by means of the Void which is (Śiva's) supreme power. (39)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhairavi* O Bhairavī *praṇavādisamuccārāt* by uttering a *praṇava* or the like *śūnyabhāvanāt* and by meditating on the Void

[100] This is the state of oneness with Bhairava's infinite consciousness.

plutānte at the end of (its) prolated sound (the yogi) *eti* attains *śūnyatām* Emptiness *śūnyayā* by means of the Void *parayā* (which is Śiva's) supreme *śaktyā* power.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By (first) uttering Praṇava or the like briefly, and after that by uttering it at length, and then after that (again for even) longer, like the crowing of a cock. After the pervasion (that follows), it is conquered by taking the state of emptiness as a support and uttering the Void (of consciousness) beyond the Void (of the phenomenal world). (Then, having thus) crossed over the emptiness (of objectivity) by practicing introversion, the supreme state (*gati*) is considered (to have been attained and made one's own, firmly grasped) like a *bilva* fruit in (the palm of one's) hand, not otherwise.

Śivopādhyāya

'**Praṇava and the like**' are kinds of *praṇava*. The words '**and the like**' are in the sense of 'type'. Thus, the Vedic *praṇava* is the syllable OṂ, Śiva's *praṇava* is the syllable HŪṂ, and Māyā's *praṇava* is the syllable HRĪṂ. Many such kinds (of *praṇava*) are taught in the Tantras. Their utterance is variously, short, long and prolated. That is (said to be) so in the *Atharvaśikhopaniṣad* (where it is said):

'The fourth (part of OṂ) at the end is a half measure. It flashes brilliantly, and is all the phonemes (and colours). It is the deity which is the soul. This is the syllable OṂ made of four letters, possessing four feet and is the measure of four phonemes. Gross, it is short, long and prolated.

Having uttered the three—OṂ OṂ OṂ—the fourth is tranquil. By applying the prolated (form), it is OṂ which is the All. Having abandoned that (and gone beyond it), the Light of the Self (appears), having repeated it (just) once.'[101]

Amongst the long phonemes, uttered for a long time, a phoneme, like the resonance of an empty vessel, extending for three measures, is (considered to be) prolated. At the end of this kind of prolated (sound), when the prolated (sound) has come to rest, by meditating on the void (which is such), because the object such as the Point and the rest does not climb (up further, the yogi)

[101] *See below, Śivopādhyāya's commentary on v 42.*

'attains Emptiness by means of the Void' that is, by attaining the state void of objectivity. (This is) **'(Śiva's) supreme power'**, that is, he attains the Supreme Bhairava's state which is free of duality. Thus, by the power of (their) collective combination, the undivided Brahman awakens the prolated utterance. The upper Half Measure, which is undivided pure consciousness (follows), once (that) prolated (sound is produced) at the end of which is the Void that cannot be uttered. That also, in the end, becomes the totality (*samastam*) (of all the levels). Concerning the meaning of the *praṇava* (it is said that) the phonemes A, U and M individually denote that Supreme Brahman. The *praṇava* utters the nature of the Brahman as a totality (of all the levels) by means of the fourth phoneme, which is the Half Measure.

According to the teaching (of the *Yogasūtra*) 'its denotator is *praṇava*', the fourth (*turīya*) abode is beyond all change. It is the one reality, which is the undivided consciousness that is the domain (*viṣaya*) of the Half Measure. (This is so) where (in the course of uttering the syllable OṂ the dualistic) state of (its) specific (form and composition) grounded (in the perception of it) as the object of contemplation (*paramārśanīya*) is brought to a halt and its fitness for the reflective awareness (of its true nature as encompassing all levels of consciousness) is brought to life. There (in that case), the reflective awareness of the Supreme Lord who is consciousness comes to the fore as the abundance of the (universal) state (of OṂ as the Brahman, which is) the totality (of all of it as a single whole).

Or else, (*praṇava* would be considered to be a form of verbalization like any other concerning which) the principle (*nyāya*) (applies) that 'the verbalization of a phrase (*padavacana*) is for the sake of the sentence (*vākya*) (of which it is a part). The verbalization of a phoneme corresponds to the utterance of a part of that'. (In accord with this dictum, this) takes place in a part of a seed syllable (*bīja*) like *praṇava* and in a syllabic Mantra (*piṇḍa*). (This is true, but) the primary (nature of OṂ is not the parts of its sonic content, rather), on the contrary, the primary (nature of OṂ is that it is) a (word which is a) denotator (of meaning, not just a phonemic sound). Thus, the settled conclusion (*nirṇaya*) is that *praṇava* is the denotator (*vācaka*) of Supreme Śiva Who is (one) without a second, completely full (and devoid of any limitations).

As the venerable Puṣpadanta (has written in the *Śivamahimnastotra*):

'The word OṂ, O bestower of refuge, encompasses (*gṛṇāti*) the totality (*samasta*) and the parts (*vyasta*) (of which it is made). Confining (it)

(*avarundhāna*) with atoms of resonance, assuming the triad which is the three modalities (of A U M) as the three worlds, and so too the three vowels by means of the phonemes beginning with the phoneme A, the fourth is Your abode beyond (all deforming) transformation (*vikṛti*)."[102]

17) The start and end of any letter become the Void by the Power of the Void

यस्य कस्यापि वर्णस्य पूर्वान्तावनुभावयेत् ।
शून्यया शून्यभूतोऽसौ शून्याकारः पुमान्भवेत् ॥ ४० ॥

yasya kasyāpi varṇasya pūrvāntāv anubhāvayet |
śūnyayā śūnyabhūto'sau śūnyākāraḥ pumān bhavet || 40 ||

One should experience (mindfully) the beginning and end of (the utterance of) any phoneme (*varṇa*). Having become the Void by (the power of) the Void (there), the person (free of identification with embodied subjectivity becomes) the form of the Void.[103] (40)

Word-for-word meaning: *anubhāvayet* one should experience (mindfully) *pūrvāntāv* the beginning and end *yasya kasyāpi* of any *varṇasya* phoneme *śūnyabhūto'sau* having become the Void *śūnyayā* by (the power of) the Void *pumān* the person *bhavet* becomes *śūnyākāraḥ* the form of the Void.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

First, there is instruction (concerning phonetics), then the experience of it and then, in the end, again by the teacher's grace and the other (factors),

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[102] *Śivamahimnastotra* v 27.

[103] Swamijī understands *varṇa* which literally means 'letter' here to mean Mantra. The practice, he says, is to pay attention to the beginning of the utterance of a Mantra. 'It is not to be recited. It is just to think that you will recite; it is just to hold the energy of reciting mantra' VBh p. 71 note 93). Or at the end of uttering this Mantra. You maintain awareness of the Void between one repetition and the next. According to Ānandabhaṭṭa the 'phoneme' is OṂ. Śivopādhyāya does not specify but is most probably referring to Mantra. Certainly, it would be very difficult to meditate on gaps between phonemes in a word, if it is at all possible unless one speaks very slowly.

knowledge of it. (After that comes) the examination of the inner configuration of the channels (of the vital breath) etc. and then, coming to know (the true nature of) OṂ by conjoining it with the Void beyond the Void, and that into the Supreme Brahman, he then attains the state of the Void beyond the Void, that is, he goes beyond (the Void) by the insight that "all this is (illusory) just as happens with a palace of celestial musicians (that disappears by itself). Whatever else there is, is the Brahman."

Śivopādhyāya

(The yogi) should meditate on **'the beginning and end'** (of a phoneme), that is, on the intention to utter it and (the cessation of that intention) when it ends in consonance with the Void (between one recitation and the next). As before, (having become the Void) **'by (the power of) the Void'**, the form of the individual soul is the inner Void, that is, the cessation of the false arrogation of embodied etc. subjectivity.[104]

18) The prolonged sound of a *vīṇā*, at the end, the Supreme Void

तन्त्र्यादिवाद्यशब्देषु दीर्घेषु क्रमसंस्थितेः ।
अनन्यचेताः प्रत्यन्ते परव्योमवपुर्भवेत् ॥ ४१ ॥

tantryādivādyaśabdeṣu dīrgheṣu kramasaṃsthiteḥ |
ananyacetāḥ pratyante paravyomavapur bhavet || 41 ||

He who (listens) with undivided attention to the prolonged sounds of stringed and other instruments of (the notes played) in their due order (to make music), when (their resonance) comes to an end, (his) body is the Supreme Void. (41)

Word-for-word meaning: *ananyacetāḥ* he who (listens) with undivided attention; *dīrgheṣu* to the prolonged *tantryādivādyaśabdeṣu* sounds of stringed and other instruments *kramasaṃsthiteḥ* (of the notes played) in due order (to make music) *pratyante* when (their resonance) comes to an end *paravyoma-vapur bhavet* (his) body is the Supreme Void.

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[104] This meditation is in *Śāmbhavopāya*.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Experiencing[105] (something) like the resonance of a (pleasing) sound or the relish of (a delicious) drink, (one may ask oneself just after having done so) "What is this? What is (its) purpose here?" (However,) the syllables (of the name) de—va—da—tta each uttered after three hours (*prahara*) do not subsequently develop into the experience (of the name as it would) by uttering (the syllables) close (to one another). After that, that is, after (that) perception and by the emergence of (that) perception (one knows that) 'the one called Devadatta is some Brahmin (with that name)'. After that, (one may come to know that he is a Brahmin from) the east, west, south or north (of India). After that, (one comes to know more about him, for example) that he regularly studies the Vedas. After that, that 'this is the son of Vāmanadatta' and, after that, that (he is) the brother of Sukhadatta, then that he is the son of Pṛthu and Udaryā. (Thus) he is perceived (and known to be who he is) by being linked to the categories to which he belongs.

Similarly, one whose '**attention is undivided**' to the sequences (of musical sounds) of string and other musical instruments and applies his mind to the rhythm (of the music), its regularity and the rhythmic cycle etc. by virtue of his sense (*bhāvanā*) of oneness with it due to the firmness of (his) practice of concentration, he becomes the Brahman and (his) '**body is the Supreme Void**'.

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[105] According to Swami Lakshmanjoo the practice here is in *Śāmbhavopāya*. This is because the direct experience of the Void of consciousness is free of thought. Moreover, the meditation implies, although it does not say so directly, that the support for the mediation is the aesthetic experience of the music. The performance of a Rāga may be introduced by slow movements of pure melody that progresses from the lower to the higher tones, thereby gradually and systematically presenting the melody of the Rāga exemplified in its improvised passages. Much of the aesthetic quality of the music is derived from its long slow tones. The music naturally induces a warm and deep meditative state in a person who is sensitive to the beauty of this musical sound. He or she is taught to pay careful attention to how the long, beautiful sound of the notes resonates to finally merge into the Void of silence. The experience of beauty, as do all emotions, resonates within the Void of consciousness which is pervaded by deep feelings free of thought. Although the commentators do refer to this aesthetic dimension, their focus is on the sound and its cessation. Accordingly, Ānandabhaṭṭa directs the attention to the sound between letters of a word uttered at length.

This is the overall sense in accord with teaching stated previously, namely: 'He attains the Supreme Brahman who is deeply merged in the Brahman that is Sound (*śabdabrahman*)'[106] Or else (it can be said that) he transcends the Brahman that is Sound.

Śivopādhyāya

String instruments and the like are those whose parts are strings and the like and (so too other) particular musical instruments that can be played, such as the Śatatantrī, Parivādinī and the Tumbavīṇā. Their sounds are notes (produced) in sequences (*mūrcchana*) set in due order (to make music). '**(He who (listens)) with undivided attention**' to the many prolonged sounds, that is, who is engaged (*yukta*) in the series of mental changes that have as (their) support those (musical sounds), his body is the Supreme Sky by virtue of (his) concentration on each one of the sounds. '**When they come to an end**', that is, when the sound ceases and no other support arises (for the activity of the mind), (he experiences) penetration into the Supreme Void (*paravyomasamāveśa*). The prolonged length (of the sounds) is an appropriate reason here for (his) state of undivided attention.

After having first taught the procedure (*krama*) concerning the gross phonemes and then the meditation on the Void at the end of a prolonged utterance (of OṀ or the like) by ascending (through) Bindu and other such realities that need to be known (in the course of ascent), he now teaches the meditation on the Void (*śūnyadhāraṇā*) at the end of prolated (sound) in the course of ascent through the subtle nature of the Half Measure (at the end of a syllabic) Mantra.

19) The Void at the end of the resonance of a seed syllable Mantra

पिण्डमन्त्रस्य सर्वस्य स्थूलवर्णक्रमेण तु ।
अर्धेन्दुबिन्दुनादान्तशून्योच्चाराद्भवेच्छिवः ॥ ४२ ॥

piṇḍamantrasya sarvasya sthūlavarṇakrameṇa tu |
ardhendubindunādāntaśūnyoccārād bhavec chivaḥ || 42 ||

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[106] VBh 38.

By uttering the Void (at the end) of the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), the Point (*bindu*), Sound (*nāda*), and the End (of Sound) of an entire syllabic (*piṇḍa*) mantra in accord with the sequence of (its) gross letters, (the yogi) becomes Śiva. (42)

Word-for-word meaning: *ardhendubindunādānta-śūnyoccārād* By uttering the Void (at the end) of the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), the Point (*bindu*), Sound (*nāda*) and the End (of Sound) *sarvasya* (of an) entire *piṇḍamantrasya* syllabic mantra *sthūlavarṇakrameṇa* in accord with the sequence of (its) gross letters *bhavec chivaḥ* (the yogi) becomes Śiva.

Swamijī: (This meditation begins in) *Āṇavopāya* leading to *Śāmbhavopāya* as the result is the experience of the Transmental. First recitation of gross letters is in Vaikharī. Then, Half Moon to Bindu is Madhyama. Nādānta goes to Paśyantī and the *śūnya* will go to Parā.[107]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The sense is that (the yogi) becomes Śiva by the utterance of the Void (of consciousness), having known with certainty the final form (of the level of development) of the aforementioned Navātmā (mantra) and the rest (of the mantras mentioned at the beginning)[108] by means of the powers Vāmā and the rest or of the Nine Principles etc. or AHAṂ by the union of Śiva and Śakti (by means of the letters) beginning with A and ending with H or OṂ, that is, its utterance that takes place by the sequence of the phonemes A, U, M (followed by) the Point (*bindu*), the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), Sound (*nāda*), the End of Sound (*nādānta*), Power (*śakti*), the Pervasive One (*vyāapinī*), the Equal One (*samanā*), the Transmental (*unmanā*) and the Supreme (power) (*parā*), (successively) in due order.

Śivopādhyāya

The form of the *Piṇḍamantra* (which in this example is Navātman) consists of the (phonemes) H, S, R and KṢ etc. Its gross sequence of phonemes begins with H and ends with the sixth vowel (Ū). After this (group of) nine (pho-

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[107] *Swami Lakshmanjoo's VBh p. 77 n 99; see also The Secret Supreme 6: 41–46*

[108] *See above v. 11.*

nemes) comes the Point, then the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), and after that Sound (*nāda*). When one sees, for example, the Person which is one's own shadow (that becomes visible as a sign that death is immanent) at the end, that is, at the culmination of the Point, Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), and Sound (*nāda*) (comes) the Void (*śūnyarūpa*). By its extended utterance (the yogi attains) Paramaśiva's state.

The instrumental case (of the compound) *sthūlavarṇakrameṇa* ('by the sequence of (its) gross letters') marks it as an adjective. Thus, the meaning is 'the *Piṇḍamantra* characterized by the sequence of (its) gross letters.' Although it is possible for (all the vowels) A and the rest to be uttered prolatedly, even so the text books (on grammar) are well known to refer most often to the prolated utterance produced from the phoneme U. As Pāṇini (the grammarian) says: 'A vowel whose time is that of short u1, long ū2 and the prolated ū3 is called respectively short (*hrasva*), long (*dīrgha*) and prolated (*pluta*).'[109]

Others teach that the sequence of ascent on the rungs of the measures of *praṇava* begin with the navel and (continue) up to the End of the Twelve (as follows): 1) the letter A in the navel, 2) the letter U in the heart, 3) the letter M in the mouth, 4) the Point (*bindu*) between the eyebrows, 5) the Half Moon on the forehead, 6) the Obstructress (*nirodhinī*) above the forehead, 7) Sound (*nāda*) on the head, 8) the End of Sound (*nādānta*) on the forehead, 9) Power (*śakti*) on the skin, 10) the Pervasive One (*vyāpinī*) in the root of the topknot, 11) the Equal One (*samanā*) in the topknot, 12) the Transmental (*unmanī*) at the end of the topknot. (Thus) traversing (them) up to the End of the Twelve (which is at the tip of the topknot) and so too crossing over the plane of the sixteenth (digit of the Moon), contemplate one's own Self within the Stainless seventeenth located in the End of the Twelve which is Supreme Śiva whose form is the Sky (of consciousness).

Such is the characteristic (of these stages, the scripture) teaches as the tradition (concerning the procedure for) the Initiation by means of the Forces (*kalādīkṣā*) of the *Piṇḍamantra*. Here one should read *bindvardhacandranādānta*—the Point, the Half Moon and the End of Sound (rather than *ardhendubindunādānta*—Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), the Point (*bindu*), and the End of Sound (*nādānta*). The Half Moon is uttered after the Point.

In the same way, the body is the foundation of the Six Wheels, the Mantra that has that form is the one called *praṇava* or else its form is SO'HAM. Now,

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[109] Pā 1/2/27.

by erasing the consonants from SO'HAṂ, that is, the letters S and H, OṂ remains and so this is divided in the body (*piṇḍa*) beginning with the navel up to the End of the Twelve. Thus, the *piṇḍamantra* is the syllable OṂ. This suggests the meaning that (OṂ) is enclosed within SO'HAM in the domain of the heart. As is said:

'Unstruck Sound shining radiantly in the chest is OṂ, consisting of all speech arranged and contained within it. Resonating intensely in the heart, it is the supreme plane. We attend with reverence to that great syllable of truth (and imperishable Being).'

Divided into its own twelve measures beginning with A and ending with the Transmental (layed out) in the sequence of the heart, throat, palate and the rest, (the syllable OṀ) is distributed within the inner locations (of the body) beginning with the navel and ending with the tip of the topknot. The sequence of the phonemes (of OṂ), that is, the sequence of the letters that need to be recited, is in the navel, heart and face because (the first) three measures (i.e. A U M) that are to be recited are gross. The time it takes to utter the gross phonemes is a (triple) measure. (The higher, subtle stations of the utterance of OṀ) beginning with the Point up to the Equal One (*samanā*) (take up just) half a measure. Supreme Śiva's location is above that.

The *piṇḍamantra* characterized by this (series of) gross phonemes at the beginning possesses a Point (*bindu*), Half Moon (*ardhacandra*) and the Void. Although they are not mentioned, one should (also) perceive (and consider to be present) here (all the other stations of ascent, namely) the Obstructress (*nirodhinī*), Sound (*nāda*), Power (*śakti*), the Pervasive One (*vyāpinī*) and the Equal One (*samanā*). The word 'Void' (*śūnya*) denotes the Transmental (*unamanī*) (which is the last one). Thus, the meaning is (as follows). By uttering the Point (*bindu*), the Half Moon, the Obstructress (*nirodhinī*), Sound (*nāda*), the End of Sound (*nādānta*), Power (*śakti*), the Pervasive One (*vyāpinī*), the Equal One (*samanā*) and the Transmental (*unmanī*) thereby contemplating the twelve (subtle) measures of the time of utterance, (the yogi) becomes Śiva. Or else, by uttering the Void of the measures from the letter A to the Equal One and by contemplating (their) emptiness, (the yogi attains) Supreme Śiva's state, which is the Transmental. The universe up to the end of the Equal One should be abandoned and penetration into the Supreme Reality of the Transmental should be adopted. (The Lord) has taught the characteristics of the Transmental and the rest in the *Netratantra* (where we read):

'That energy (*śakti*) which is supremely subtle is the Transmental and it is Śiva by nature. It is the pure Being which is the Self and object of arousal (into manifestation). If it is aroused that power is called the Equal One (*samanā*), who is the energy that is present (everywhere) in all the cosmic order. The one who embraces the universe, withdrawing it and then emitting it again, is the great power called Kuṇḍalī, secondarily said to be the third one. If the flash of light (*sphoṭa*) in the form of Resonance (*dhvani*) spreads forth with great force from Śiva's invisible form, filling the universe with (its) resonance, that is Sound (*nāda*), the Lord of the God of the gods, who is said to be Sadāśiva.'[110]

The End of Sound has also entered here (into the sequence and so the Tantra continues).

'Where the resonance, which is present unchecked in the cosmic order, comes to rest is Nirodhinī (the Obstructress), who obstructs all the gods. The glorious power of Śiva's state does not operate for one who has been obstructed. Countless billions of Mantras are located there. Those (yogis) who have entered into that attain (them).' The energy of the one who recites Mantra called the Obstructress '.... is the Point that is said to be Īśvara (*tattva*). If Śiva's nectar, which is the cause of emanation, falls on (the yogi's) head, (he is) nourished and so that is said to be the Half Moon.'[111]

This is the Half Moon that comes from the plane of the Point when that continues to develop further (lit. 'has risen above'). All living beings are withdrawn ...' coming down from Sound '... and is also the cause of (their) emanation. The phoneme M here is Rudra, it is the most excellent coming together of the phonemes (of OṂ). If it attains a state of stability (*sthiti*), it is the cause of emanation propense (*svonmukha*) towards itself. It is the phoneme U called Stability (*pratiṣṭhā*) and is Viṣṇu directly apparent. If it is Completion (*nivṛtti*), all of the Pervasive Lord OṂ has been produced. That is Brahmā, whose seat is on a lotus. It is the supreme abode called the phoneme A.'[112]

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[110] NT 21/60–63

[111] NT 21/64–67

[112] NT 21/68–70ab. I have added the following concluding verse to complete the presentation of the syllable OṀ:

nivṛttis tu yadā sarvaṃ niṣpannaṃ praṇavaṃ vibhuḥ || 69 ||
akārākhyaṃ paraṃ dhāma brahmā sa kamalāsanaḥ |

Emptiness in and Around the Body (verses 43–51)

20) The Void in all directions within the body

निजदेहे सर्वदिक्कं युगपद्भावयेद्वियत् ।
निर्विकल्पमनास्तस्य वियत्सर्वं प्रवर्तते ॥ ४३ ॥

nijadehe sarvadikkaṃ yugapad bhāvayed viyat |
nirvikalpamanās tasya viyat sarvaṃ pravartate || 43 ||

(The yogi) should meditate on the Void which is in all directions (at once) simultaneously within his own body, (his) mind free of thought.[113] (Thus), everything becomes Void for him. (43)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhāvayed* (the yogi) should meditate *viyat* (on) the Void *sarvadikkaṃ* (which is in) all directions (at once) *yugapad* simultaneously *nijadehe* within his own body *sarvadikkaṃ nirvikalpamanās* (his) mind free of thought *sarvaṃ* (thus) everything *pravartate* becomes *viyat* Void *tasya* for him.

Swamijī: 'And, whatever is a vacuum, that is Lord Śiva. Nothingness is Lord Śiva; because Lord Śiva is not this thing, not this thing. What is Lord Śiva? Nothing. No-thing is something, something which is not thinkable, (not) expressible, which is not felt, which can't be felt, which can't be imagined, which can't be known, which can't be sought—that is nothing". It is "*śūnyātiśūnya* which is perceived in the end by holding *śūnya*. (2002: 80 note 103) *Āṇavopāya*, in the beginning, as yogi must cultivate the thought of Voidness first. Then goes to *Śāmbhavopāya* as his mind is concentrated and so, free of thought constructs (*ekāgramana*), experiences the Voidness of pure Śiva consciousness.[114]

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[113] It appears that the form *nirvikalpamanās* functions as a nominative singular. Ānandabhaṭṭa takes that to be so in his commentary and repeats the same in his gloss on the word as *ekāgramanāḥ*—'a concentrated mind'.

[114] Swamijī is saying that as the depth of meditation develops, the space all around the body and the dark space within it come to be experienced as the expanse of Śiva consciousness. In the beginning, there is a sense of the body and the space around it and so practice begins in the Individual corporeal means. However, if it develops into the experience of pervasive Śiva consciousness, practice turns into *Śāmbhavopāya*, which is free of thought constructs and with it all sense of conceptual, relative distinctions.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

If (the yogi is one whose) mind is free of thought, that is, (concentrated and) one-pointed, meditating on the Void in all the directions, that is, the east and the rest, contemplating Voidness (everywhere) in all respects, (reflecting that) "blue, yellow and the like (sensations) are nothing at all". Contemplating that, like the silver in mother of pearl, (the senses) have no object (he realizes that everything is) the Supreme Void, for this is just his notion of the Void and the rest (not the ultimate experience of it)."[115]

And the same has been taught in the Pratyabhijñā:

'Having abandoned the true nature of consciousness due to the influence of Māyā, that which manifests as different in (each) body, intellect, mind, vital breath and the conceived emptiness (of deep sleep) or as if it were the subjectivity (within them) as the reflective awareness of 'I' (am the body etc.) (that has its own distinctive identity) by negating all others (as not itself). This (subjectivity) is just a thought construct generated by the appearance of what is other (than itself) (and serves as) its counter-corelate.'[116]

The sense is that by such (statements) one should understand that what is the supreme Void beyond the Void (of objectivity) is the Śiva principle. For it is just there (in the same book) that it is ascertained that:

'The agents that are identified with realities other than consciousness, such as the void (of deep sleep)[117] are the Pralayākala (perceivers who are Deconditioned due to the universal destruction they experience in deep sleep).[118] Karmic impurity also affects them (as does the impurity of individuation—

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[115] Again, as in many other instances, the practice begins with a deep reflection that everything is nothing, just the emptiness of an illusion. When this has been fully and profoundly realized, the Void of illusion is experienced as a state of oneness with the Supreme Void of Parabhairava's ultimate nature and formless form.

[116] ĪP 1/6/4–5.

[117] The emptiness of deep sleep is the result of the cessation of all perceptions and notions in the domain of objectivity. It is pure Māyā, which is the 'substance' without content or form of all that is experienced objectively. It is a kind of 'material absence' of reality which is in the domain of the subject.

[118] Concerning these and the other six perceivers, see chapter ten of the *Tantrāloka* that is totally dedicated to this subject.

āṇavamala); whereas the impurity of Māyā may optionally be present (*vikalpitaḥ*) (or not).'[119]

Śivopādhyāya

He whose mind is (fully) concentrated should contemplate the Void in all directions—in front, to the right and left as well as behind—simultaneously (*akrameṇa*). Then he enters into the Supreme Void.

21) The Void in the Root and the Void above

पृष्ठशून्यं मूलशून्यं युगपद्भावयेच्च यः ।
शरीरनिरपेक्षिण्या शक्त्या शून्यमना भवेत् ॥ ४४ ॥

pṛṣṭhaśūnyaṃ mūlaśūnyaṃ yugapad bhāvayec ca yaḥ |
śarīranirapekṣiṇyā śaktyā śūnyamanā bhavet || 44 ||

He who simultaneously contemplates the Void above[120] and the Void in the root (foundation below) becomes devoid of mind (*śūnyamanā*) by the power (of consciousness) that is independent of the body. (44)

Word-for-word meaning: *yaḥ* he who *yugapad* simultaneously *bhāvayec* contemplates *pṛṣṭhaśūnyaṃ* the void above *ca* and *mūlaśūnyaṃ* the void in the root (foundation below) *bhavet* becomes *śūnyamanā* devoid of mind *śaktyā* by the power (of consciousness) *śarīranirapekṣiṇyā* (that is) independent of the body.

Swamijī: 'now you have to imagine first that above me there is voidness, below me there is voidness, below my body; and afterwards you try to find out your body....' This is just the intensity of maintaining awareness on voidness. When you maintain awareness on voidness intensively above and below, your body will be missing.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having meditated on the Void above, below, on the right and on the left, and so too all around and having thought with the deep feeling (*bhāvanā*) that 'all this

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[119] ĪP 3/2/8.

[120] The literal meaning of the word '*pṛṣṭha*' is behind. However, both commentators and Swamijī understand it to mean 'above'. I have translated accordingly.

is indeed the Brahman', it is not surprising that the Śiva principle manifests (with the ease that is) like (holding) a *bilva* fruit in the palm of one's hand.

Śivopādhyāya

When the yogic state is attained (*saṃpatti*) in which (the yogi experiences that) the body is without support by contemplating the Void above and below, he realizes that the power (of consciousness) does not depend on the body.

22) The Void in the Root, the Void above and the Void in the heart

पृष्ठशून्यं मूलशून्यं हृच्छून्यं भावयेत्स्थिरम् ।
युगपन्निर्विकल्पत्वान्निर्विकल्पोदयस्ततः ॥ ४५ ॥

pṛṣṭhaśūnyaṃ mūlaśūnyaṃ hṛcchūnyaṃ bhāvayet sthiram |
yugapan nirvikalpatvān nirvikalpodayas tataḥ || 45 ||

One should meditate firmly, simultaneously on the Void above, the Void in the root (foundation below) and the Void in the heart, thus, being free of thought, (the liberated state) free of thought dawns. (45)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhāvayet* (one should) meditate *sthiram* firmly *yugapan* simultaneously *pṛṣṭhaśūnyaṃ* (on the) Void above *mūlaśūnyaṃ* the Void in the root *hṛcchūnyaṃ* the Void in the heart *tataḥ* thus *nirvikalpatvān* being free of thought *nirvikalpodayas* (the liberated state) free of thought dawns.

Swamijī agrees with Śivopādhyāya by equating these three places as the Voids as the subject, means and object of knowledge, respectively. All these parts of the body and what they represent are all the Void of consciousness.

Śivopādhyāya[121]

Meditate on the nature of the subject above as Voidness. Similarly, meditate on the Root also, that is, the location of the anus, which is the object, as the

[121] This verse is missing in Ānandabhaṭṭa's redaction. Indeed, it may be taken to simply be a variant of the previous one.

Void. The Void of the Heart is in the middle of the Heart. It is the means of knowledge. Meditate on the Voidness (there also). The Voidness of the heart, which is in the middle of the meditator, is the greatest (*adhikā*). 'Firmly' is a particular (yogic) practice (*kriyā*). The abode of consciousness that is 'free of thought' (thus) 'dawns', that is, becomes manifest. The venerable Vāsudeva has also said (the same):

'The Void above, the Void below and the Void without support in the middle—he who knows the triple Void is the beloved of the Kula.'

The meaning is that the Kula, which extends from the body up to Śakti, is made blissful by generating the Supreme Voidness.

23) Emptiness in the body, the mind free of thought

तनूदेशे शून्यतैव क्षणमात्रं विभावयेत् ।
निर्विकल्पं निर्विकल्पो निर्विकल्पस्वरूपभाक् ॥ ४६ ॥

tanūdeśe śūnyataiva kṣaṇamātraṃ vibhāvayet |
nirvikalpaṃ nirvikalpo nirvikalpasvarūpabhāk || 46 ||

(If the state) free of thought (*nirvikalpa*), which is nothing but the emptiness within the location of the body, contemplates (the mind made) free of thought (*nirvikalpam*), for just a moment, (the one who is thus free of thought) possesses the nature of (that reality) free of thought. (46) (45)

Word-for-word meaning: *nirvikalpo* (if the state) free of thought, *śūnyataiva* (which is) nothing but the emptiness *tanūdeśe* within the location of the body, *vibhāvayet* contemplates *nirvikalpaṃ* (the mind made) free of thought, *kṣaṇamātraṃ* for just a moment, *nirvikalpasvarūpabhāk* (the one who is thus free of thought) possesses the nature of (that reality) free of thought.

Swamijī: 'mind is actually nothing; it thinks without concern', 'it creates useless impressions which are not connected.... And when this (formation of mind) takes (its) end, this (mind) is put to an end.' 'In your body, you should just for one moment concentrate on that voidness, mind is actually void of everything; mind is very great, the highest, and this is one with Lord Śiva'.

You have to just imagine 'my body is seated nowhere.' With your thought-free state, you have to imagine that although you are seated, just see that 'I am seated nowhere, my body is seated nowhere." And discard all your thoughts in

your mind. (Then) the state of thoughtlessness rises: the *nirālambana* state of *samādhi* is obtained.'

This meditation begins in *Śāktopāya* and then progresses into *Śāmbhavopāya*.[122]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Nothing exists without the Śiva principle. All of this is the place of the play of consciousness. As condensed (consciousness), it manifests as if made wonderfully various. The same is said in the *Siddhāntamuktāvalī*:

'I see all this duality like a picture. I abide like the formless (Lord) as one with many forms. I recollect the non-dual Self, one with endless bliss and the beautiful world like a burnt rope. So too I experience wonder (as tangibly) as a *bilva* (fruit) in the palm (of my) hand. I see the body as if it were a snake's slough. In this way also my life and (all that) manifests (*pratibhāsana*) (to me), and (even the) attainment of the supreme good is accomplished.'

This and more are taught (there). Thus, in this way it is proved that what is commonly believed (*prasiddha*) is without foundation (and illusory) like the city of celestial musicians.

Śivopādhyāya

The word *tanū* (meaning 'body') ends with the letter 'ū'. It is said in the (Sanskrit lexicon called) *Amarakośa*: '(the words) *mūrti* ('icon'), *tanu* ('body') and *tanū* ('body') are feminine.' 'Within the location of the body', means on the level of the limited perceiver (where) there is only Voidness. Having made (the mind) free of thought, for a moment so small that it barely has a measure (*etāvanmātram*) (of existence) (that emptiness itself) contemplates. What

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[122] Swami Lakshmanjoo teaches that this meditation begins by imagining an absence, that is: 'my body is seated nowhere.' This is done with the mind free of thought with the aim of removing all the thoughts that may arise in moments of distraction. The removal of thought (one could call it the 'purification of thought') is a cardinal characteristic of meditative practices belonging to the Empowered Means. When that process is complete practice develops into the state free of thought constructs characteristic of meditations in *Śāmbhavopāya*.

and how? The intended sense is (that that is done) by the contemplation of the Void above and (below in the) foundation etc. (The state) **'free of thought'** is one in which no fear is felt by attaining (and perceiving) the state free of support (from objectivity).

24) All the substance of the body is pervaded by the Void

सर्वं देहगतं द्रव्यं वियद्व्याप्तं मृगेक्षणे ।
विभावयेत्ततस्तस्य भावना सा स्थिरा भवेत् ॥ ४७ ॥

sarvaṃ dehagataṃ dravyaṃ viyadvyāptaṃ mṛgekṣaṇe |
vibhāvayet tatas tasya bhāvanā sā sthirā bhavet || 47 ||

O gazelle-eyed one! One should reflect (*vibhāvayet*) that all the (organic) substance in the body is pervaded by the Void; then one's contemplation (*bhāvanā*) (of the Void) would be firm. (47) (46)

Word-for-word meaning: *mṛgekṣaṇe* O gazelle-eyed one *vibhāvayet* one should reflect (that) *sarvaṃ* all *dravyaṃ* the (organic) substance *dehagataṃ* in the body *viyadvyāptaṃ* is pervaded by the Void *tatas* then *tasya* one's *bhāvanā* contemplation *bhavet* would be *sthirā* firm.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

All this is pervaded by the Void, because (all one's) goals are unreal, like the snake (superimposed mistakenly on a) rope or like (the imagined) city of celestial musicians. By meditating in this way, the (organic) substance such as flesh in the body is well known to be Empty. The Light (of consciousness) shines by the stability of this meditation.[123]

Śivopādhyāya

He whose meditation on the Void, as taught, does not rest (in his) heart immediately, should especially reflect that all the (organic) substance present in the

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[123] Here, as in other places, Ānandabhaṭṭa is clear that by saying that the body is made of Emptiness it means that it is unreal. Śivopādhyāya does follow his predecessor in this view several times, but not always. Sometimes, as here, leaving it for the teacher to decide how to instruct the disciple. He only says that the Void pervades the body. Is this the Void of illusion or that of consciousness?

body is pervaded by the Void. After that, the meditation (*bhāvanā*) devoid of (even the) latent trace of what needs to be attained of that disciplined (yogi) becomes firm (and stable).[124]

25) The skin is the wall of the body. Inside, it is empty

देहान्तरे त्वग्विभागं भित्तिभूतं विचिन्तयेत् ।
न किञ्चिदन्तरे तस्य ध्यायन्नध्येयभाग्भवेत् ॥ ४८ ॥

dehāntare tvagvibhāgaṃ bhittibhūtaṃ vicintayet |
na kiñcid antare tasya dhyāyan adhyeyabhāg bhavet || 48 ||

One should think that the part which is the skin within the body is (an encompassing) wall, within which there is nothing at all. Meditating (in this way), (the yogi) participates in what cannot be an object of meditation. (48) (47)

Word-for-word meaning: *vicintayet* one should think *tvagvibhāgaṃ* the part which is the skin *dehāntare* within the body *bhittibhūtaṃ* is (an encompassing) wall *tasya antare* within which *na kiñcid* (there is) nothing at all *dhyāyan* meditating (in this way) *adhyeyabhāg bhavet* (the yogi) participates in what cannot be an object of meditation.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The body that has come about fashioned by means of the five-fold aggregation of the five gross elements, is gross, destructible and fickle like the tip of an elephant's ear. There was no stability here, (nor) is (there now) or could be. In this way, there is no division into directions (in space) and the like (in relation to the body). (The skin) is just an outer insentient wall. One should (take care) to examine (that carefully) because (one conceives that) 'this is the right side' or 'this is the left' etc. (The body is) not (absolutely) real (for if it were to be so it would not be spatially divisible whereas) the perceiver is real (as he is not). By virtue of this true (and correct) ascertainment, (the yogi) is said to be a man of knowledge.

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[124] As a reinforcement of the previous meditation, it belongs to the same category of means to realization. In this case the progress from the Empowered practice by which though is eradicated is longer.

Śivopādhyāya

'**Within the body**', that is, within the domain of one's own body, there is a particular part (of it) that is on the outside of it, which is the skin. One should think of it (*bhāvayet*) as '**serving as an (encompassing) wall**', that is, like an insentient external wall. Although '**meditating**' that there is nothing within it at all, '**(the yogi) participates in what cannot be an object of meditation**', and that is the supreme pervasion (of consciousness that comes to the fore) because the subjectivity (that identifies with) the subtle body (*puryaṣṭaka*) has ceased.

26) Merging the senses in the Void encapsulated in the Lotus of the Heart

हृद्याकाशे निलीनाक्षः पद्मसंपुटमध्यगः ।
अनन्यचेताः सुभगे परं सौभाग्यमाप्नुयात् ॥ ४९ ॥

hṛdyākāśe nilīnākṣaḥ padmasaṃpuṭamadhyagaḥ |
ananyacetāḥ subhage paraṃ saubhāgyam āpnuyāt || 49 ||

O Blessed One, (the yogi) whose senses have merged into the space within the Heart and (abides there) with an undistracted mind in the centre between the two halves of the lotus (of the Heart), attains supreme good fortune. (49)

Word-for-word meaning: *subhage* O Blessed One *nilīnākṣaḥ* (the yogi) whose senses have merged *hṛdyākāśe* into the space within the Heart *ananyacetāḥ* (and abides there) with an undistracted mind *padma-saṃpuṭamadhyagaḥ* in the centre between the two halves of the lotus (of the Heart) *āpnuyāt* attains *paraṃ* supreme *saubhāgyam* good fortune.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The assembly (*cakra*) of the inner senses bound together with the outer senses is in the lotus of the heart and is '**in the centre between the capsules (of the two) lotuses**' thus, one whose '**awareness is undistracted**' '**attains supreme good fortune**'. The inner dawning (of consciousness) takes place by the cessation (*uparama*) of the outer field (of the senses). This is the meaning.

Śivopādhyāya

The state of being (*bhava*) relating to the heart—*hṛd*—is *hṛdya* 'heartfelt' and 'attractive'.[125] (Such is) the space on the plane in between the exhaled and inhaled breath. He whose '**(inner) sense**', that is, the mind and, through that, the wheel of the other senses, is such, is present '**in the centre between the two lotuses**' that are above and below (respectively). He has entered into it by means of meditation (*bhāvanā*). The upper lotus is the means of knowledge. The one below is the object of knowledge. (The yogi) abides between them, that is, in his own essential nature, which is the perceiver called 'pure consciousness' (*cinmātra*). Thus, as his awareness (*cetas*) is such, namely, that it is not (centred) within anything else apart from pure consciousness, he '**attains supreme good fortune**'. The essential nature of the Lord of the universe's (cosmic) state is supreme bliss. By its expansion, he attains (all that is most) desirable.

The world of transmigratory existence consisting of (all) the objects of knowledge and the rest is figuratively described (here) as a capsule (made of two) lotuses. As the mind enters into the luminosity of consciousness, it beholds the universe pervaded by it. This is the meaning.

Discussion

Kṣemarāja refers to this meditation in the course of his commentary on a meditation taught in the *Śivasūtra* which teaches: 'By fixing the mind in the Heart (the yogi) has a vision of the perceivable and of dreams.'[126]

Bhāskara comments: 'The mind is said to be fixed in the Heart (of consciousness) which is its sustaining ground when it assumes a stable state (*sthiti*) (there within it). In this way, (the yogi) has a vision of the perceivable and of dreams. The emptiness (*vyoman*) of deep sleep is technically called the 'Heart' because it resides in the centre. The contemplation (*samādhāna*) of the Self is here said to be the fixing of the mind because the interconnected patterns

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[125] The immediate sense of the expression *hṛdyākāśe* is as translated and understood by Ānandabhaṭṭa, that is, *hṛdi ākāśe* i.e. 'the space within the heart'. It can also be read as two separate words in the compound *hṛdya-ākāśe* 'the space that is attractive to the heart'.

[126] *hṛdaye cittasaṃghaṭṭād dṛśyasvāpadarśanam* ŚSūvi ad 1/15.

(*jāla*) of (mental) activity which emerge from it become one (in this way) within one's own nature. When it dissolves away in that emptiness (all sense of being) a brahmin, *Kṣatrīya* or (even) a murderer (ceases) because (these notions) relate to the body and are associated (with the activity of the mind).

The perceivable is the object of realization (*upalabhya*), that is, one's own awakened nature (*svasvarūpa*) free of obscuration, the attainment of which is said to be vision. (This) vision takes place here (in the Heart) when the delusion which induces dreams is destroyed and the awakened (yogi) pervades (all things) at all times by penetrating the Divine Seal (*divyamudrā* of enlightenment). (The yogi) of unawakened intellect (experiences only) a vision of dreams, which for the awakened is the freedom to dream as he wishes (*svapnasvātantrya*) (that he achieves) by drinking the lunar nectar (*soma* of *apāna*, the descending breath). This is the rending asunder of the darkness (of false egoity) and the arising of enlightened intuitive consciousness (*pratibhodaya*)."[127]

The End of the Twelve (50–51)

27) Dissolving the mind into the End of the Twelve

सर्वतः स्वशरीरस्य द्वादशान्ते मनो लयात् ।
दृढबुद्धेर्दृढीभूतं तत्त्वलक्ष्यं प्रवर्तते ॥ ५० ॥

sarvataḥ svaśarīrasya dvādaśānte manolayāt |
dṛḍhabuddher dṛḍhībhūtaṃ tattvalakṣyaṃ pravartate || 50 ||

By dissolving away the mind in all respects (completely) into the End of the Twelve of his own body, the goal which is (the one ultimate) reality comes forth well established for (the yogi whose) intellect is firm (and unwavering). (50) (49)

Word-for-word meaning: *manolayāt* by dissolving away the mind *sarvataḥ* in all respects (completely) *dvādaśānte* into the End of the Twelve *svaśarīrasya* of one's own body *tattvalakṣyaṃ* the goal which is (the one ultimate) reality *pravartate* comes forth *dṛḍhībhūtaṃ* well established *dṛḍhabuddher* for (the yogi whose) intellect is firm (and unwavering).

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[127] Bhāskara's commentary in Dyczkowski 1992b: 42–46.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

For the yogi whose intellect is firm (and unwavering), the reality which is the goal, namely, the supreme light of consciousness, having become firm and attained a state of concentration, comes forth by the dissolving away of the mind and the destruction of the latent traces (of past Karma) within the End of the Twelve which is the Void beyond the Void (*śūnyātiśūnya*), or else within *suṣumnā* which is the Middle Abode. It is explained clearly in the following way in the Spanda teachings (where we read):

'Then in that great sky, when the Sun and Moon dissolve away, the dull-minded (yogi is cast down) into a state like that of deep sleep. The awakened, however, remain lucid.'[128]

Śivopādhyāya

By the entry of the god of consciousness **'in all respects (completely)'** into the body, even into the pores of the skin, the mind, (made) firm (and unwavering), attains a state of concentration there in the End of the Twelve. By (its) dissolving away, which is the cause of its coming to rest, the reality, which is the goal of the yogi whose intellect is firm (and unwavering), that is, the light of the supreme reality, comes forth and extends (everywhere).

28)[129] Cast the mind in any way, always and everywhere, into the End of the Twelve

यथा तथा यत्र तत्र द्वादशान्ते मनः क्षिपेत् ।
प्रतिक्षणं क्षीणवृत्तेर्वैलक्षण्यं दिनैर्भवेत् ॥ ५१ ॥

yathā tathā yatra tatra dvādaśānte manaḥ kṣipet |
pratikṣaṇaṃ kṣīṇavṛtter vailakṣaṇyaṃ dinair bhavet || 51 ||

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[128] SpKā 25 also quoted above by Ānandabhaṭṭa in the commentary on v 35.

[129] Editor's Note: In Mark's list, two distinct meditations are numbered 28. In addition, verse 138 is treated here as a separate meditation, resulting in a total of 114. Rather than speculating as to whether this reflects a typographical oversight or a deliberate choice, the numbering has been retained as it appears in Mark's manuscript.

One should cast one's mind into the End of the Twelve in any way and wherever, every moment, and so for one (whose mental) activity (has) ceased (by this practice), an unparalleled (state) arises within (a few) days. (51) (50)

Word-for-word meaning: *kṣipet* (one should) cast *manaḥ* (one's) mind *dvādaśānte* into the End of the Twelve *yathā tathā* in any way *yatra tatra* wherever *pratikṣaṇaṃ* every moment *kṣīṇavṛtter* (for one whose) mental activity has ceased *vailakṣaṇyaṃ* an unparalleled state *bhavet* arises *dinair* within (a few) days.

Swamijī (2002: p. 55): 'When you are walking or talking or doing some household work or doing any other trivial act, just concentrate on *dvādaśānta* [the End of the Twelve finger space at the top of the head]. Your mind must hold the state of *dvādaśānta* in each and every act of your daily routine of life. But this must be held in continuity [every moment]. Then one is born anew—in days, not in months.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The meaning is that in the very same way as taught previously, once the fickle movement (of the mind) has been quelled, the unparalleled manifestation of Parabhairava results.

Śivopādhyāya

'**In any way**' that takes place spontaneously in whatever way consciousness extends. '**Wherever**' out of the (places) mentioned previously, in that place, that is, in (one of them that is an) End of the Twelve.[130] '**Every moment**', again and again, cast the mind (there), that is, concentrate it (there). '**One (whose mental) activity (has) ceased**' and its fickleness has been quelled in this way, '**within (a few) days**', that is, in a short time, (he experiences) '**an unparalleled**' (state), that is, the unique state of Parabhairava. (If we accept) the read-

[130] The body is measured in sets of twelve finger-breadths. There are eight of them from the soles of the feet to the top of the head of a standing man. This covers the extent of the physical body. There is another span of twelve fingers below the feet and another above the head. The extra space covers the subtle body that extends outside the physical one, making 108 fingers altogether. See TĀ 7/68cd-70ab.

ing 'in whatever way wherever' (*yathā yathā yatra yatra* for *yathā tathā yatra tatra*), the syntax would be 'in whatever manner within whichever object of sense the mind is cast, in that way there (arises in that place) **'an unparalleled'** (state).

Discussion

Jayaratha quotes this meditation in his exposition of one of the ways to enter the Heart taught in chapter five of the *Tantrāloka* where it says that '(the yogi should enter the Heart) at the tip of all the channels.'[131] Jayaratha explains that 'that is, in the sphere of the End of the Twelve, whether the basic one (*pradhāna*) (at the base of the spine), or the one at the very end (of the subtle body).'[132]

The Transformation of the Cosmic Body (52–53 (51–52))

28) Burning the Body with the Fire of Time

कालाग्निना कालपदादुत्थितेन स्वकं पुरम् ।
प्लुष्टं विचिन्तयेदन्ते शान्ताभासस्तदा भवेत् ॥ ५२ ॥

kālāgninā kālapadād utthitena svakaṃ puram |
pluṣṭaṃ vicintayed ante śāntābhāsas tadā bhavet || 52 ||

(The yogi) should think that his own body has been burnt (to ashes) by the Fire of Time that has arisen from the (toe of the right foot, which is) the abode of (the Fire of) Time. Then, in the end, the Tranquil One manifests. (52) (51)

Word-for-word meaning: *vicintayed* (the yogi) should think that *svakaṃ* his own *puram* body *pluṣṭaṃ* has been burnt to ashes *kālāgninā* by the Fire of Time *utthitena* arisen *kālapadād* from the (toe of the right foot, which is) the abode of (the Fire of) Time *tadā* then *ante* in the end *śāntābhāsas bhavet* the Tranquil One manifests.

Ānandabhāṭṭa

Having imagined (*vibhāvya*) the body burnt away by the Fire of Time arisen from the toe of the right foot by (the practice of) Yoga, the yogi's per-

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[131] TĀ 5/71cd-72ab.

[132] The 'basic' or main (*pradhāna*) End of the Twelve is the genital centre.

vasive breath (*vibhāvasu*) in the form of consciousness shines (and so is clearly manifest).

Śivopādhyāya

'*oṃ ra-kṣa-ra-ya-ūṃ* I am burning the body *namaḥ*'—Having visualized in this way, Kālāgnirudra, arisen from the toe of the right foot, (the yogi) should imagine (*bhāvayet*) that the body is reduced to ashes by its flame. He says that (with the words) 'by the Fire of Time' etc. (The yogi) should visualize (*dhyāyet*) that '**his own body**' is the bdellium (offered to the deity), burnt away (by the Fire of Time that has arisen) from the (toe of the right foot, which is) the abode of (the Fire of) Time. (This is done) by the practice of imagining the burning etc. of the body which is (a form of) contemplation of the Self. This too is *Āṇavopāya*.

Discussion

Jayaratha quotes this meditation in his commentary on TĀ 29/259–260, where we find the expression '*aṃguṣṭhamūlapīṭhakrameṇa*'. This could be understood to mean '(rising) sequentially from the big toe, which is the sacred seat in the root.' The big toe of the right foot is generally considered in India to be the lowest part of the body. The fire that consumes the microcosm is said to rise from there. Just above it is the Earth world and the letter KṢ, which is its phonemic counterpart from which it is derived.

Kṣemarāja quotes this meditation and the one in verse 57 (56) in his commentary on *Śivasūtra* 3/4 that states that 'the forces are withdrawn into the body' (*śarīre saṃharaḥ kalānām*). According to Bhāskara: 'The forces are said to be the specific functional capacities of (each of) the principles of existence. The body is made up of the union of these (forces) and so consists of the multiple aggregates of energies (*sakala*) which are (the corporeal) support of the Self. The withdrawal of the forces there (in the body) is said to be the progressive penetration (and absorption, *anupraveśa*, of each one of them) into their respective causes. This continues until (the yogi) attains a body of pure awakened consciousness (*bodhadeha*) and there (experiences) the Supreme Arising (*parodaya*, of ultimate reality). Or else, (the yogi) may attain *Śivatattva* through a (single) act of transcendence (*ullaṅghanavṛtti*). This also involves the withdrawal of the forces due to which (the yogi experiences) the arising (*udaya*, of universal consciousness).

29) Once the entire universe has burnt away

एवमेव जगत्सर्वं दग्धं ध्यात्वा विकल्पतः ।
अनन्यचेतसः पुंसः पुंभावः परमो भवेत् ॥ ५३ ॥

evam eva jagat sarvaṃ dagdhaṃ dhyātvā vikalpataḥ |
ananyacetasaḥ puṃsaḥ puṃbhāvaḥ paramo bhavet || 53 ||

Having meditated in this same way by imagining that the entire universe has been burnt away, a person whose mind is undistracted is endowed with the soul's supreme state. (53) (52)

Word-for-word meaning: *dhyātvā* having meditated *evam eva* in this same way *vikalpataḥ* by imagining *sarvaṃ* the entire *jagat* universe *dagdhaṃ* has been burnt away *puṃsaḥ* a person *ananyacetasaḥ* whose mind is undistracted *puṃbhāvaḥ paramo bhavet* is endowed with the soul's supreme state.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having imagined '**in this same way**' that everything, (both) external and internal, within the body, '**has been burnt away**' by the flame of the Fire of Time arisen from the toe of the right foot, the goal of life (*puruṣārtha*) for one whose mind is free of thought constructs is directly apparent. This is the rest (implied here).

Śivopādhyāya

Everything within the body and outside (is burnt away) by the Fire of Time (that thus) arisen (results in attainment of) the soul's supreme state, that is, Bhairava's state as the unlimited subject. Having, thus, made the meaning of the meditation taught previously firm (and certain) and having first of all taught (the manner in which) the burning away of one's own body is imagined, here (he teaches) the creative contemplation (*bhāvanā*) that burns away the entire universe. This is the difference (between this meditation and the previous one).

30) Progressively more subtle merger until Parā is revealed

स्वदेहे जगतो वापि सूक्ष्मसूक्ष्मतराणि च ।
तत्त्वानि यानि निलयं ध्यात्वान्ते व्यज्यते परा ॥ ५४ ॥

svadehe jagato vā 'pi sūkṣmasūkṣmatarāṇi ca |
tattvāni yāni nilayaṃ dhyātvānte vyajyate parā || 54 ||

Having meditated on the merger of the subtle and (then progressively) most subtle principles (back into one another) that are within one's own body or also of the universe, in the end, (the Goddess) Parā is revealed. (54)(53)

Word-for-word meaning: *dhyātvā* having meditated on *nilayaṃ* the merger *sūkṣmasūkṣmatarāṇi ca* of the subtle and (then progressively) most subtle *tattvāni* principles *yāni* that are *svadehe* within one's own body *vā 'pi* or also *jagato* of the universe *ante* in the end, *parā* (the Goddess) Parā is *vyajyate* revealed.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having meditated on the merger into their own respective causes of the Earth and the rest of the five gross elements and their permutations, as many as they may be, such as flesh and bones etc., in the end, the Goddess Parā becomes clearly manifest. The sense is that Parā clearly manifests externally all that is present within (consciousness in a potential form), like the juices of a peacock's egg. The overall sense is that the dawning of Parā is accompanied by the supreme mantra of grace (*parāprasāda*) (i.e. SAUḤ).

Śivopādhyāya

Having meditated, whilst dying,[133] on the merger into their own respective causes, of the subtle and (progressively) more subtle principles, as many as there may be, that is, Nature, the intellect, ego and the rest as well as Earth and the rest of the five gross elements and their permutations, such as flesh and bones etc. that are within one's own body or else associated with the entire universe, in the end the Goddess Parā becomes clearly manifest.

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[133] It is a common belief that at death the constituent elements of the body return to their universal source. Accordingly, Śivopādhyāya is certainly not wrong in pointing out that this takes place at death. It is notable, however, that he is the only one who refers it specifically and uniquely to that. It is common yogic practice to rehearse the phases in the process that leads to death. See below v. 138 (136), where one meditation is agreed by both commentators to be practiced when dying.

(If we accept the variant reading) *tattvāni yātāni layam* ('the principles that have merged') the meaning is that, all the principles have merged, that is, have as if been destroyed. Having meditated in this way, the Goddess Parā appears.

31) Mastery over Dreams

पीनां च दुर्बलां शक्तिं ध्यात्वा द्वादशगोचरे ।
प्रविश्य हृदये ध्यायन्मुक्तः स्वातन्त्र्यमाप्नुयात् ॥ ५५ ॥

pīnāṃ ca durbalāṃ śaktiṃ dhyātvā dvādaśagocare |
praviśya hṛdaye dhyāyan svapnasvātantryam[134] *āpnuyāt* || 55 ||

Having meditated on the energy (of the breath) fat (with its natural sound) as well as weak (and lengthy) in the region of the twelve (finger space then), once entered into the heart (when falling asleep) whilst engaged (in this) meditation, (the yogi) attains mastery (over his dreams). (55) (54)

Word-for-word meaning: *dhyātvā* having meditated on *śaktiṃ* the energy (of the breath) *pīnāṃ* fat (with its natural sound) *ca* as well as *durbalāṃ* weak (and lengthy) *dvādaśagocare* in the region of the twelve (finger space) *praviśya* once entered *hṛdaye* into the heart (when falling asleep) *dhyāyan* whilst engaged in (this) meditation *āpnuyāt* (the yogi) attains *svapna-svātantryam* mastery over (his) dreams.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Initially, the power of the vital breath is 'fat'. By consuming food (*anna*) and drink etc., it becomes fat. Then again (after that), it becomes subtle by (the practice of) breath retention and the like by (following the) path of the teacher's teachings. Then, causing that (power of the vital breath) to enter the heart in the beginning or (at the end) into the End of the Twelve, 'whilst

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[134] Read with Swami Lakshmanjoo *svapnasvātantryam*—'mastery over one's dreams' for *muktaḥ svātantryam* 'one who is free (attains) mastery' of the printed edition. Neither of the two commentators appears to be aware of this reading. Even so, this variant is supported by Kṣemarāja's quotation of this verse in SpNir (p. 56), where the reading is *svapna-* for *muktaḥ*. Abhinava's lightly paraphrased citation of this verse also supports this variant reading. See below.

engaged (in this) meditation,' (the yogi attains) the nature of the Supreme Lord who is free.

Śivopādhyāya

Initially, the power of the vital breath is 'fat', then, (it becomes) progressively thin (*kṛśā*),[135] that is, subtle and, having meditated on it (as such) within the End of the Twelve and in the Heart by means of the (practice of the) procedure (taught for) the control of the breath (*prāṇāyāma*), **'whilst engaged (in this) meditation,'** (the yogi attains) the nature of the Supreme Lord who is free.

Discussion

Abhinavagupta quotes this verse in the *Tantrāloka*, altering its form a little, but even so, it is clear that the *Vijñānabhairava* he had before him also referred to this practice as a way of attaining freedom when dreaming:

uktaṃ ca pūrṇāṃ ca kṛśāṃ dhyātvā dvādaśagocare ||
praviśya hṛdaye dhyāyet suptaḥ svācchandyam āpnuyāt |

It is said that, 'having meditated on (the energy of the vital breath, first) full and (then) thin, in the region of the twelve (finger space), once having entered into the heart (in the centre), meditating, the one who sleeps attains freedom.' (TĀ 15/483 (480cd-481ab))

Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in his commentary on SpKā 33–34, which reads:

'Requested by the will, the benefactor makes the Sun and Moon rise, and bestows on the embodied while they wake, the objects that are created in (their) heart. So also, in the dream state (Śiva), residing in the centre, manifests without exception, always and most vividly, the things (his devotee) desires, because he never desists from (his) prayerful request.'

We have observed in the introduction that it is very likely that the author of the *Stanzas* knew the *Vijñānabhairava*. It appears that Rājanaka Rāma, commenting on the *Stanzas*, knew this verse with this variant, seeing, as does

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[135] Note that Śivopādhyāya's commentary suggests that he reads, as does Abhinava 'thin' for 'weak'. See preceding note.

Kṣemarāja, its relevance to these verses in the *Stanzas*. Thus, in his commentary, he writes: '(The true yogi is one who), because he is intent every moment (on exercising his) reflective awareness (*pratyavamara*), never at any time, in the course of any experience, neglects the prayer he has achieved through his own innate power. (This prayer is his) merger with his own nature, the Benefactor and Lord of all. The Benefactor manifests for one such as he (who is not negligent in his prayer) the things he desires, even while he dreams, just as when he is awake. The things (he experiences) while dreaming that (seem to come about) freely, (independent of his will) do not restrict (his) own (inherent) power, which is that of universal agency. This is because he is (no longer) a worldly soul subject to rebirth, but he is free and creates them by (his) own power as he wishes. Just as Bhartṛhari says: 'The Lord of all, endowed with every power, dividing Himself by Himself and creating phenomena of various sorts, becomes, while dreaming, the enjoyer.' Therefore, this is called 'freedom to dream' (*svapnasvtantrya*), and as there is no difference for the (enlightened yogi) between waking and dreaming, this same (state) is said to be 'the destruction of the cover of darkness that obscures (consciousness).'"[136]

It is a standard part of the preliminary rites of initiation for the teacher to examine the postulant's dreams to determine whether they are auspicious or otherwise. Abhinava adds a new dimension to this procedure by teaching how the neophyte can remain lucid in the dream state. In this context, Abhinava is not concerned with the freedom, the lucid dreamer may have to create or alter the contents of his dreams, he focuses instead on the insight that he can develop as a lucid dreamer, to see for himself directly whether the signs of future events (in this case, the initiation,) are auspicious or not.

The merger of the Six Paths into consciousness (56–57)

32) Meditation on the Six Paths as gross, subtle and supreme

भुवनाध्वादिरूपेण चिन्तयेत्क्रमशोऽखिलम् ।
स्थूलसूक्ष्मपरस्थित्या यावदन्ते मनोलयः ॥ ५६ ॥

bhuvanādhvādirūpeṇa cintayet kramaśo 'khilam |
sthūlasūkṣmaparasthityā yāvad ante manolayaḥ || 56 ||

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[136] Dyczkowski 1992a: 113 Lucid dreaming and its application to yogic practice in the context of the Spanda teachings is discussed in detail in Dyczkowski 1992a 241–245.

One should think successively of everything in the form of the path (*adhvan*) of the worlds (*bhuvana*) and the rest (of the paths), in (their) gross, subtle and supreme condition until, in the end, the mind dissolves away. (56) (55)

Word-for-word meaning: *cintayet* One should think *kramaśo 'khilam* successively of everything *bhuvanādhvādirūpeṇa* in the form of the path (*adhvan*) of the worlds (*bhuvana*) and the rest (of the paths) *sthūlasūkṣma-parasthityā* in (their) gross, subtle and supreme condition *yāvad* until *ante* in the end *manolayaḥ* the mind dissolves away.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The sixfold Path is called that of the worlds (*bhuvana*), (reality) principles (*tattva*), Forces (*kalā*), parts of Mantra (*pada*), Mantra and phonemes in the form of the object of denotation (the first three) and the denotator (the last three). By practicing that Path in the gross and subtle state and that of oneness, and then, by the dissolving away of the mind there itself, (the yogi attains) the Supreme Summit. This is the sense (of this verse). And the same (is said) in the *Mālinīvijaya*: 'Śiva is beyond the Path.'[137]

Śivopādhyāya

(The yogi) should meditate on the universe consisting of the group of six Paths, gross, subtle and supreme, beginning with that of the worlds. Thus, he says '**the path (*adhvan*) of the worlds (*bhuvana*) and the rest (of the paths)**.' The meaning here is this: the sixfold Path called that of the worlds (*bhuvana*), (reality) principles (*tattva*), Forces (*kalā*), parts of Mantra (*pada*), Mantra and phonemes consists of the unfolding of the power of action as the manifestation of the denotator and the object of its denotation in the supreme, gross and subtle state. Moreover, there the phonemes reflect upon the universe as undivided; the Mantras as divided-cum-undivided and the parts of Mantra as divided. The succeeding Path pervades each of the preceding Paths, whereas each of the succeeding (Paths) contains the preceding as that which it pervades. Thus, everything is everywhere. Accordingly, the purification of one Path as containing the other five Paths is enjoined in various places in the scripture. (For example), that is said in the venerable *Svacchandatantra*:

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[137] This quarter verse cannot be traced in the printed edition of the *Mālinīvijayottara*.

'The worlds within (the series) beginning with Ananta and ending with Śiva pervade the (reality) principles (*tattva*). (Those reality principles) are thirty-six pervaders. (The other three Paths are those of) Mantras, phonemes and parts of Mantra. They are all included within the (reality) principles by virtue of the association of (the reality principles which are) the objects of denotation with (the Path of Mantra etc. that are) their denotators. Those that are included within the (five) Forces (*kalā*) are said to be Nivṛtti and the rest (of the Forces).'[138]

The worlds[139] beginning with Ananta and ending with Śiva are present in (lit. 'pervade') the reality principles (*tattva*), and those pervasive principles are thirty-six. The other three Paths are Mantras, phonemes and parts of Mantra. There are fifty parts of Mantra and the ones associated with Navātman are eighty-one. Moreover, all of those are included within the principles and the principles include them. Taking this to be so, how is it that in relation to the objects of denotation and the denotators, namely, the principles etc. that are the objects of denotation and the Mantras etc. that are the denotators? This (relationship between the Paths exists) because they have been proclaimed (to be such as a part) of the initiation that takes place by the purification of the Forces (*kalā*) (in which all the other Paths are included and related to each other).

Thus, the inclusion of the five Paths is said to be their inclusion within the Forces. This is the meaning in a nutshell of this book (i.e. the *Svacchandatantra* that expounds) all the Paths. The Supreme Lord, who, the free ruler (of all) (*bhaṭṭāraka*), is dense (uninterrupted) consciousness. He manifests all at once, the endless (reality that) begins with the Void and ends with Earth, which is the object of denotation, and (so too) the denotator, onto the screen of His own (nature) by means of his own power of freedom called the Transmental (*unmanā*) as if it was separate from Himself although it is not. There, the denotator is present in the part which is the perceiver and is three-fold, divided into supreme, subtle and gross as (the Path of) the phonemes, Mantra and the parts of Mantra. Similarly, the object of denotation is posited within the objective part and consists (analogously) of (the Path of) the Forces, principles and worlds.

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[138] SvT 4/95cd-97ab

[139] Śivopādhyāya has drawn the following passage directly from Kṣemarāja's commentary on these verses.

The phonemes are essentially the reflective awareness of oneness (*abheda*). Then, by (manifesting) as somewhat more gross, having assumed the nature of Mantra which is the Sound (*nāda*) that is the reflective awareness of unity-in-difference (*bhedābheda*), they then manifest as gross in the form of the parts of Mantra, which perceives the reflective awareness of duality. In this way, the Supreme Goddess, who is the power called Kalā ('Force') and form, is the object of denotation, assumes the nature of the worlds by becoming progressively more differentiated. Moreover, in reality, this power of the Supreme Goddess shines forth devoid of succession and there itself, by virtue of her own freedom, also manifests succession like a city (reflected) in a mirror (that is both immobile and yet constantly changing).

Even when there is succession, each preceding phase pervades the one that follows as does clay, for example, with respect to the jar (that is made from it). The one that precedes each succeeding (phase) abides as a potency (with respect to it), like the tree in its seed. Thus, everything is of the nature of all things. So, in the course of the initiation (that is imparted by means) of the five principles (of the Forces that correspond to the five gross elements), it will be (explained how) the gross elements extend up to transcendental (*anāśrita*) (Śiva). In this way, every single perceiver or existing thing is, in actual fact, Parabhairava by nature as the repose within the (supreme) subjectivity of (all the forms of) reflective awareness (*parāmarśa*) beginning with that of A and ending with that of H that made of the unfolding expansion of the six Paths.

Once contemplated in this way the entire universe consisting of the six Paths beginning with that of the worlds, and there dissolved away whatever is more gross into what is (less) gross and (then) dissolved that away into what is subtle, (then when) that (dissolves away) into awakened pure consciousness, the Great Awakening (of enlightened consciousness dawns). (It does so) in this way by the method (of the configuration) (*prakṛiyā*) of the Paths, which is the reflective awareness of Śiva's (reality) principles. This is the meaning. This meditation on emptiness (*śūnyabhāvanā*) has also been taught as the process of (gradually) dissolving away of each (lower reality) principle (progressively into the succeeding one). In a nutshell:

'The triad beginning with (the Path of the) worlds is the object of denotation, (whereas) the triad which is the parts of Mantra etc. is the denotator. Again, Power is this group of six Paths and Maheśvara is the possessor of Power.'

Discussion

This meditation, along with the one taught in verse 52 (51), is quoted by Kṣemarāja in his commentary on *Śivasūtra* 3/4, that declares, 'the forces are withdrawn into the body.' See above, references to verse 52 (51) for Bhāskara's commentary.

33) Meditating that Śiva is all things by means of the Paths

अस्य सर्वस्य विश्वस्य पर्यन्तेषु समन्ततः ।
अध्वप्रक्रियया तत्त्वं शैवं ध्यात्वा महोदयः ॥ ५७ ॥

asya sarvasya viśvasya paryanteṣu samantataḥ |
adhvaprakriyayā tattvaṃ śaivaṃ dhyātvā mahodayaḥ || 57 ||

Having meditated on the true nature (*tattva*) of all this universe as Śiva (who is within all things) right up to the very last ones, all around (in every way) (*samantataḥ*) by (applying) the procedure of the (six) Paths, (there comes about) the Great Awakening (*mahodaya*)! (57) (56)

Word-for-word meaning: *dhyātvā* Having meditated on *tattvaṃ* the true nature *sarvasya* of all *asya* this *viśvasya* universe *śaivaṃ* as Śiva *paryanteṣu* right up to the very last ones *samantataḥ* all around (in every way) *adhvaprakriyayā* by (applying) the procedure of the (six) Paths *mahodayaḥ* (there comes about) the Great Awakening.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Without (the existence of) the Śiva principle, nothing at all (would exist) either as a universal or a particular on the Six Paths right up to the very last ones of the Paths of the Worlds and the rest.[140] Once understood that it is the essence (of everything), there comes about **'the Great Awakening'**, that is, the shining forth of Supreme Śiva. This is the meaning. The same is taught in the *Mālinīkalpottara* by such statements as:

'Having abandoned this same group of Six Paths and the rest and conquered the assembly of the senses along with the (fundamental) causes, he who has accomplished (his) goal, shines in the world like the sun.'

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[140] Read *bhuvanādyadhvaparyanteṣu* for *bhuvanādhvaparyanteṣu.*

Śivopādhyāya

Śiva, who is the light (of consciousness) and reflective awareness, is the Supreme Lord. Having meditated on this, its essential nature, as the Śiva principle (there comes about) '**the Great Awakening**', that is, the manifestation of the Light (of consciousness). The class of objects of denotation consists of the Worlds, Principles and Forces and is in reality the Light (of consciousness). The aggregate of denotators is the Phonemes, Mantra and Parts (of Mantra), the body of which is reflective awareness. Thus, the combination of both (together is like) the combination (of the two) fire sticks (used to generate the sacrificial fire). (The yogi who is of that nature) should meditate on the wonder of the experience of the simultaneous occurrence of the two powers of (contemplation, namely the one) with the eyes open (*unmīlana*) and (the one with) the eyes closed (*nimīlana*) (symbolized as two fire sticks). Without Śiva, there would be nothing (in any of the things) of the universe, right up to the very last ones on the Paths of the Worlds and the rest. Thus, having abandoned the cosmic form, meditating on (transcendental) Śiva alone, there should be '**the Great Awakening**'.

As is said in the *Karmakāṇḍakramāvalī*

'Amṛteśvara is victorious. He who, accompanied by (his) power, is on the triple Path made of the three, seven, four and the pair.'

(The following) is the meaning of what (this) Brahmin teacher (*upādhyāya*) has taught. First come 'the three', namely, the short (vowels) A (*anuttara*), I (*icchā*) and U (*unmeṣa*). Then comes the group of seven consisting of Ā (*ānanda*), Ī (*īśana*), Ū (*ūrmi*) and (the four) neuter (vowels) Ṛ Ṝ Ḷ and Ḹ. The four are the diphthongs (E AI O AU) and the pair is *anusvāra* (Ṃ) and *visarga* (Ḥ). With that, that is, within its essential nature as the Self (*puruṣa*) consisting of (these) sixteen energies, are 'on the triple Path', that is, the three Paths of the Phonemes, Mantra and Parts of Mantra, that are the denotators grounded in unity, unity-in-diversity and diversity (respectively). Mṛtyuñjaya, who is within that, removes the body (subject to) time and is the Supreme Lord who is awakened consciousness. He is '**accompanied by (his) power**'. His own force, called Kalā, assumes the form of the (reality) Principles and Worlds along (with herself). It is indicated in this way that the three Paths, of the Forces (*kalā*), Principles (*tattva*) and the Worlds (*bhuvana*) are the object of denotation. One should know that this kind of sixfold Path is supreme, subtle

and gross. The object of denotation is contained within the denotator and so is not indicated separately. Thus, it is said that (Mṛtyuñjaya) is on the 'triple Path'. The rest is the same as taught previously. Thus, this suffices.

He now teaches (the same) according to the procedure of taking the support of outer emptiness.

Discussion

Referring to this meditation in his commentary on TĀ12/4, Jayaratha explains that: 'this six-fold Path extends from (pure) consciousness up to the external (world). (The adept) should, by virtue of (his own innate) freedom, (project) his own contracted nature into 'every single aspect (*tatra tatra*)' of the Path, consisting of the worlds and parts of Mantra etc., and (reflect) by means of his self-awareness that 'I myself am the supreme soul (*haṃsa*),'[141] by virtue of which he should make the corresponding uncontracted nature, which is Supreme Śiva, manifest. The meaning is that he should realise (himself to be) of that nature.' Jayaratha then goes on to quote this verse of the *Vijñānabhairava* declaring that the same is said there.

33) Meditating that Śiva is all things by means of the six Paths

विश्वमेतन्महादेवि शून्यभूतं विचिन्तयेत् ।
तत्रैव च मनो लीनं ततस्तल्लयभाजनम् ॥ ५८ ॥

viśvam etan mahādevi śūnyabhūtaṃ vicintayet |
tatraiva ca mano līnaṃ tatas tal layabhājanam || 58 ||

O Great Goddess! One should think that this universe is Void and that the mind is dissolved away just there itself. Thus, that is the vessel of merger. (58) (57)

Word-for-word meaning: *mahādevi* O Great Goddess *vicintayet* one should think that *etan* this *viśvam* universe *śūnyabhūtaṃ* is Void *ca* and *mano* the mind *līnaṃ* dissolves away *tatraiva* just there itself *tatas* thus *tal layabhājanam* that is the vessel of merger.

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[141] SvT 4/339c. Also quoted in TĀv ad 4/51cd-52ab. The full line states. 'I myself am the supreme soul (*haṃsa*), Śiva, the supreme cause' *aham eva paro haṃsaḥ śivaḥ paramakāraṇam* SvT 4/399cd.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

All this universe, moving and immobile, is nothing at all. It is (imaginary) like the city of celestial musicians. It is (a mental) projection called 'nonexistence' and the like, devoid of name and form, the abyss of Māyā. Whereas what exists, is characterized as self-illuminating existence (*sat*), the essence and the vessel of merger.

Śivopādhyāya

The universe is empty. It has reached the state of the Void (of consciousness) beyond the Void (of the illusory world).[142] Merger there is the state of oneness.

Physical emptiness develops into the emptiness of pure consciousness (59–60)

35) Dissolving away by gazing at the empty space of a jar without sides

घटादिभाजने दृष्टिं भित्तीस्त्यक्ता विनिक्षिपेत् ।
तल्लयं तत्क्षणाद्गत्वा तल्लयात्तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ ५९ ॥

ghaṭādibhājane dṛṣṭiṃ bhittīs tyaktvā vinikṣipet |
tallayaṃ tatkṣaṇād gatvā tallayāt tanmayo bhavet || 59 ||

One should cast (one's) gaze into (the empty space of) a jar, for example, (or any other) vessel, having set aside (its) enclosing surfaces. Having dissolved away into it, in that very moment, one becomes of that nature by virtue of that merger. (59) (58)

Word-for-word meaning: *vinikṣipet* one should cast *dṛṣṭiṃ* (one's) gaze *ghaṭādibhājane* into (the empty space of) a jar, for example, (or any other)

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[142] The Void beyond the Void is the Void of Śiva consciousness that transcends the Void of the illusory manifest world. Here Śivopādhyāya disagrees with his predecessor Ānandabhaṭṭa, who understands that the universe is Void purely in the sense that it is illusory. Śivopādhyāya prefers instead to perceive that Emptiness as the pure divine consciousness that is its true and ultimate nature. In other words, the former sees the world as a frustrating illusion, the latter as radiant with the Deity.

vessel *tyaktvā* having set aside *bhittīs* (its) enclosing surfaces. *tallayaṃ gatvā* Having dissolved away into it *tatkṣaṇād* in that very moment *bhavet* one becomes *tanmayo* of that nature *tallayāt* by virtue of that merger.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having set aside the right and left sides and the rest of (the sides of) an object that has an inner cavity, such as a jar and experienced that the mind has merged into the supreme Void (of Śiva consciousness) beyond the Void (of the illusory universe) by resting there and being penetrated by the Supreme Brahman, one attains the Brahman itself. This is the sense (of this verse).

Śivopādhyāya

Having set aside the sides of an object that has an inner cavity. By the repose of dissolving away there, he is penetrated by the Supreme Brahman.

Now he teaches the meditation (practiced) by fixing the gaze (*dṛṣṭibandhanabhāvanā*).

36) Gazing at empty spaces dissolves away the mind

निर्वृक्षगिरिभित्त्यादिदेशे दृष्टिं विनिक्षिपेत् ।
विलीने मानसे भावे वृत्तिक्षीणः प्रजायते ॥ ६० ॥

nirvṛkṣagiribhittyādideśe dṛṣṭiṃ vinikṣipet |
vilīne mānase bhāve vṛttikṣīṇaḥ prajāyate || 60 ||

One should cast (one's) gaze on (an open stretch of) land devoid of trees, or mountains, walls and the like. When the mind's existence is (thus) in a state of merger (and has dissolved away), one becomes free of the fluctuations (of thought). (60) (59)

Word-for-word meaning: *vinikṣipet* one should cast *dṛṣṭiṃ* (one's) gaze *nirvṛkṣagiribhittyādideśe* (on an open stretch of land) devoid of trees, on mountains, walls and the like *vilīne mānase bhāve* when the mind's existence is (thus) in a state of merger (and has dissolved away), *prajāyate* one becomes *vṛttikṣīṇaḥ* free of the fluctuations (of thought).

Commenting on this verse, Swami Lakshmanjoo explains that 'the fundamental Impurity of spiritual ignorance operates here in the Void of the Centre,

contracting it down so much that it practically disappears so that all that apparently remains is the second phase of thought construct formation which takes place in the intellect. This is the ignorance through which the Lord obscures Himself out of His own free will."[143]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having cast the pure (undistracted) gaze onto a mountain or the like or else on an empty desert or onto a very (big) lofty object, when the mind dissolves away because there is no particular (object to serve as its) support, it becomes free of all the fluctuations (of thought). The meaning is that one attains the Brahman.

Śivopādhyāya

A place devoid of trees etc. is a direction (of space) that is empty. By casting the gaze there, as the **'mind's existence'**, which is mental sentience (*citta*), is **'in a state of merger'** and has fallen away, the yogi, **'free of the fluctuations (of thought)'**, and all the fluctuations (of thought) have ceased, becomes the Great Light (*mahāprakāśa*). (Having taught this practice), he (now) teaches the meditation without support (*nirālambabhāvanā*).

Discussion

Catching hold of the first moment of perception (*prathamatuṭi*) is one of the most basic practices taught in the *Śivadṛṣti* to lay hold of the Śiva consciousness from which all perception proceeds. The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches several meditations that serve to strengthen the awareness of the first moment of perception although it does not formulate it clearly as a practice as Somānanda does. The meditation taught in this verse to achieve that consists simply of gazing out at an open expanse, resting in the pure awareness of just 'seeing'. Another common practice is centring. For that one needs to find the emptiness, free of thought constructs, of the centre

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[143] Concerning the search for the centre, see TĀv and notes to 1/83ab-84cd (1/83cd85ab), cf. also TĀ 1/181cd-182ab.

between two perceptions. The following two meditations teach how that can be done.[144]

Abhinava quotes the first line of this meditation in his commentary of the *Parātrīśikā* in the course of teaching a practice that frees perception of the delineating activity of thought so that it may rest in its pristine condition of pure consciousness. This is done by cultivating a single unified perception that views an expanse of country all together undelineated by specific features. Thus he writes:

PTv VBh 60 (p. 136), *hṛdagiri-taruprabhṛtyupādhisaṁkocena rahite tadvatyapi vā araṇyānīpradeśe dūrādakhaṇḍitā dṛṣṭir evam eva akhaṇḍitatām upāśnuvānā bhairavabodhānupraveśaṁ prati saṁpradāyatām āsādayet nirvṛkṣagiri-bhittyādau deśe dṛṣṭi vinikṣipet* | VBh 60 *ityādi anyathā bhāgaśaḥ pāte prathamabhāgāt ārabhya yadi vā niravayavameva etat tatka iva apara-saṁvedanebhyo.apūrṇābhimatebhyo viśeṣaḥ viśeṣastu garbhīkṛtānantavaicitr yacamatkārakṛta iva apūrṇasaṁvidantarebhyaḥ pūrṇābhimatasaṁvedanasya iti svayameva jānantu sopadeśāḥ pārameśvarāḥ* |

'(The yogi) should acquire the teaching concerning entry into Bhairava's awakened consciousness by attending to the state of the undivided (oneness of the field of perception), as is the perception itself undivided, where there are forests or, in the same way, (a landscape) devoid of delineating features such as lakes, mountains or trees. (It should be done as is taught in the *Vijñānabhairava*, where it says): 'One should cast (one's) gaze on (an open stretch of) land devoid of trees, or mountains, walls and the like.' (If one does so) otherwise and (the gaze were to) fall part by part, beginning with the first part or be with parts (read *savayavam* for *niravayavam*), then, how would it differ from other perceptions that are considered to be (finite and) incomplete?

The difference between (the one) perception that is considered to be full (and unconditioned) and other perceptions that (are finite and) incomplete is that it is brought by the wonder (of the experience of the) endless wonderful diversity it has encompassed in itself. May those who belong to the Supreme Lord and possess the teaching know that by themselves alone (spontaneously by direct experience).'

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[144] See my translation of TĀ 1/37–38ab and the note there where the following two meditations are quoted.

37) The Void in the centre between two objects

उभयोर्भावयोर्ज्ञाने ध्यात्वा मध्यं समाश्रयेत् ।
युगपच्च द्वयं त्यक्त्वा मध्ये तत्त्वं प्रकाशते ॥ ६१ ॥

ubhayor bhāvayor jñāne dhyātvā madhyaṃ samāśrayet |
yugapac ca dvayaṃ tyaktvā madhye tattvaṃ prakāśate || 61 ||

When perceiving two entities, having meditated (on the emptiness) that is the centre between both of them, (the yogi) should rest (there). And (then), having abandoned the two simultaneously (at once), Reality shines (there) in the centre.[145] (61) (60)

Word-for-word meaning: *jñāne* when perceiving *ubhayor* two *bhāvayor* entities *dhyātvā* having meditated (on the emptiness that is) *madhyaṃ* the centre (between both of them) *samāśrayet* (the yogi) should rest (there) *ca* and *tyaktvā* having abandoned *dvayaṃ* the two *yugapac* simultaneously (at once). *tattvaṃ* Reality *prakāśate* manifests *madhye* in the centre.

Swami Lakshmanjoo explains: 'Just take any two pots or two things; meditate on any two objects, for instance, this case of spectacles and this paper. Concentrate on these two objects and reside and rest in between these two objects. When you perceive this object and after perceiving this object, you perceive this paper. When you perceive this object and this act is over, and the perceiving of this paper has not begun; that is *madhyama* [the centre]; that is the 'in between'. Fix your consciousness there, on *madhya* [the centre] ... While concentrating on that centre, be established in that centre. When you are established in that centre, simultaneously leave the impression of these two objects; you have to take support every now and then of these two objects ... The centre will disappear and you have to take the support of these objects again and again. See this and see that and see what is in between and when that centre is established well, then you have to discard impressions of both

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[145] The printed edition of the *Vijñānabhairava* reads *dhyātvā*—'having meditated (on)' for *jñātvā*—'having known', which is the reading in the citation quoted by Jayaratha in TĀv ad 1/84cd-86ab (see below for Jayaratha's explanation). Bäumer translates as follows: 'Meditating on the knowledge of two things or states, one should rest in the middle. By abandoning both simultaneously, the Reality shines forth in the centre.'

objects and be established in the centre and then the universal centre will be revealed. This is *Śāktopāya*.[146]

At the same time, when you breathe in and breathe out, take the support of breathing in and breathing out to establish your centre. When the centre [between] these two breaths is well established, then leave the breath aside and enter in that centre and the universal centre will be revealed.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having abandoned the essence of (all) that is included in the mass of perceivables as (their) plurality, such as 'this is a jar', 'this is a cloth' and the like and having become aware of the subjectivity in the centre (between) them (such that one experiences that) 'there is some perceiver here' and so because of that and the plurality of the perceiver, perception and the object of perception (this plurality of the mass of perceivables exists). Then, having ordained an absence of plurality by abandoning the division (between them) and attained the level of (consciousness) devoid of thought, which is like (the realization that) 'thou art that' (taught in the Upaniṣads), which is a state of one-pointed concentration called the principle of the perceiver, (one comes to realize) that it is well said that one-pointed concentration is attained by abandoning division (*vibhāga*).

Śivopādhyāya

When one is perceiving two entities, having meditated on, that is, experienced, the Void, which is the centre between them and separates (them from one another), (the yogi) '**should rest properly**' (there in the centre) by means of (that) one-pointed concentration. Then, having abandoned those two entities simultaneously, that is, having set them aside by not looking (or attending to them), there, in the centre, the yogi's '**reality**', which is (his) supreme abode, becomes manifest.

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[146] The practice here is *Śāktopāya* because it initially involves observing two things which necessarily engages thought. The two and with it, the discerning thought is reduced to the oneness of the centre between them.

Discussion

Jayaratha quotes this verse in his commentary on TĀ 1/83cd-85ab (84cd-86ab) introducing the citation with an explanation of the practice. He writes: 'The overall sense here is this. When (one) perceives two things or the existence (of one thing, conscious of the concomitant) non-existence (of other things), perceiving the centre, which is empty, that divides the two (from one another) and having simultaneously abandoned that existence (of the one thing) and non-existence etc. (of the other), he who is attentive comes to abide there (in the centre) itself, within the supreme goal, which is the Supreme Self flooded with Śiva's nectar.'

I translate the word '*jñāna*' here as 'perception', although it literally means knowledge. The 'knowledge' of individual things is accompanied by thought constructs (*savikalpājñāna*). This type of 'knowledge' is contrasted with the one that is free of thought constructs (*nirvikalpakajñāna*). The former is the perception of the two objects and specifically refers to them. The latter, which is the perception in the centre between them, has no objective referent and so is 'empty'. Perception moves from one to the other. The identification of an object as a table or a chair is a thought construct that is formed by differentiating a particular object from all others that are not tables or chairs and comparing that particular object with other tables and chairs previously identified (one could say, labelled) as such. According to the *Vijñānabhairava*, the world we experience is solely constituted of these thought constructs, and so, like a dream, although it appears, it is not real.

This is not the Trika view which is based on the Pratyabhijñā that maintains, as we have seen, that consciousness manifests freely as all things and so too as the thought constructs that accompany their perception as individual, particular things. Nothing that appears is unreal, including thought constructs. All things manifest according to their nature. Even so, the world perceived through thought constructs is one of countless particulars, each with its own fixed, determined nature. Variously related in time and space to one another, they are also cut off from one another. This is the perspective of duality and relative distinctions. This is the knowledge we have of things accompanied by thought constructs (*savikalpakajñāna*). It is centred on them as individual entities. This would not be possible if there were no underlying consciousness which is one and universal. This is the pure, undivided Light of consciousness which illumines and makes all things, including the thought constructs, manifest. This consciousness, free of thought constructs (*nirvi-*

kalpakajñāna), shines in the centre between one thought and the next, revealing itself to be the one ultimately real nature of all things.

In brief, as Ānandabhaṭṭa clearly explains, the practice is to attend with total attention to the perceiver between the perception of one object and the next. Thus, giving up all attention to the differences between things, the consciousness of oneness in which the perceiver experiences himself as the universal nature of all things. The next meditation continues with the same theme.

38) The expansion of meditation in the centre by abandoning an object without moving to another

भावे न्यक्ते निरुद्धा चित् नैव भावान्तरं व्रजेत् ।
तदा तन्मध्यभावेन विकसत्यति भावना ॥ ६२ ॥

bhāve tyakte niruddhā cit naiva bhāvāntaraṃ vrajet |
tadā tanmadhyabhāvena vikasaty atibhāvanā || 62 ||

When one thing has been concealed (*tyakte*) (or abandoned), and consciousness has been (firmly) checked, it should not move on to something (*bhāva*)[147] else. Then meditation (*bhāvanā*) blossoms forth intensely (*ati*)[148] by virtue of (the emptiness of) the state (free of thought) in the centre (between) them (*tanmadhyabhāvena*). (62) (61)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhāve* (when one) thing *tyakte* has been concealed (or abandoned) *cit* and consciousness *niruddhā* has been (firmly) checked *naiva vrajet* it should not move on *bhāvāntaraṃ* to something else *tadā* then *bhāvanā* meditation *vikasaty* blossoms forth intensely (*ati*) *tanmadhyabhāvena*

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[147] Generally, the word '*bhāva*' is understood here to mean a phenomenal entity. In that case, the practice is to allow one's attention (= consciousness) to desist from attending to some entity and prevent it from moving on to attend to another, as normally happens in the course of perception. In this way, a state of meditative absorption that transcends the usual perception of objects develops in the centre between the two. In this case, the word '*bhāva*' may also be understood to mean 'state', that is, the state of tranquil repose within consciousness, and that of its emergence out of that into perception. But this is not the way either of the two commentators understand it.

[148] Read *vikasaty atibhāvanā* for *vikasatyati bhāvanā*.

by virtue of (the emptiness of) the state (free of thought) in the centre (between) them.

Swamijī: Your mind is rested between will, and knowledge that comes out of the will. 'Knowledge' here is the point in between *nirvikalpa* and *vikalpa*. You must not reach *vikalpa*. 'What is this?' is will–must move out of that but don't get to 'this is a handkerchief.' (This is) *Śāktopāya* when moving with support and *Śāmbhavopāya* when resting in the centre without support (nothing on either side).'

The manuscripts of the *Vijñānabhairava* contain more meaningful variant readings than manuscripts of most other texts. So much so that the Sanskrit commentator Śivopādhyāya refers to variant readings on several occasions in his commentary and even comments on them separately. Occasionally, Swami Lakshmanjoo does the same. In this case, he explains that by adopting the reading *atyakte* for *tyakte* and *tanmayabhāvena* for *tanmadhyabhāvena*, a different meditation (*dhāraṇā*) is taught in this verse, which would then be translated thus:

'When, without abandoning one thing (*atyakte*), consciousness has been (firmly) checked, one should not move on to something else. Then transcendental contemplation (*atibhāvanā*) blossoms forth, by being one with it (*tanmayabhāvena*).'

Swami Lakshmanjoo explains: 'One *dhāraṇā* [meditation] is just to look at a pot. ... Do not think of any other thing. ... Go on concentrating on that pot only. ... Your thought must be established in that one object, in objective consciousness. Do not go to another object. Keep your consciousness alive. It must not be dead. When you are tired of seeing it again and again, your consciousness is dead and your consciousness wants to see another object because you want to see something new. But do not do that; it must not be dead.... You must keep it alive for the time being. You must not, at any cost, go to another object.... Then you will become one with that object, objective consciousness melts in your subjective consciousness. The mixture of that particular objective consciousness and your particular subjective consciousness of the object only enters in universal consciousness.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

When one thing has been selected, the (cognitive) consciousness that **'has been (firmly) checked' 'should not move on to something else'.** (The mean-

ing is that) it should not move on to another entity. There, in the centre between them, by virtue of its condition as Void by nature (*śūnyarūpa*), meditation unfolds intensely (*ativikasati*) on the analogy of the (eyes) dilated (by the sight of something) astonishing. So too, the mind becomes extremely expanded. The meaning is that the Brahman itself is attained.

Śivopādhyāya

'When one thing is concealed (*nyakte*)',[149] (means) when an entity that is an object of meditation (i.e. a visualized deity), the form of which possesses three eyes and four arms or the like, is hidden away and unseen and **'consciousness'**, that is, awareness (*cetanā*) **'has been (firmly) checked'** by the proficiency of practice. Once it has been very well fixed and (so) (well) established (in consciousness), **'it should not move on to something else'**, that is, another thing, such as a jar, the body of which has been perceived.

The Vedic commentator (Yaska has defined the meaning of) *nyaktam* (submerged) to be 'immersed' (*vrudita*), 'obscured' (*tirohita*) and 'hidden away' (*antarhita*). *'Nyaktam'* (also means) 'making use of a metre' (that is, setting lines of prose to verse).[150] In the case of the reading *bhāve vyakte* by adding the letter A (to the beginning of *vyakte*) (dropped in accord with the rules of *sandhi*), (we arrive at the form) *avyakte* ('unmanifest'). The meaning is just the same as stated before (i.e. when something becomes unmanifest or hidden from view ...). Similarly, in the case of Yoga, based on meditation with support (it is said):

'Having abandoned progressively the mind whose sole field (of operation is) the object of meditation, meditation and the one who meditates, the contemplative absorption (*samādhi*) (that arises) is said to be (steady) like (the flame of) a lamp in a (still) windless (place).'

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[149] Śivopādhyāya comments on three variant readings. In place of *tyakte* ('abandoned'), the text he adopts reads *nyakte* ('when removed'). This reading is also found in the citation of this verse in TĀv 29/118cd-119ab. He also refers to the variants *vyakte* ('when manifest') and *avyakte* ('when unmanifest').

[150] The word *nyaktam* is derived from the root *nyañj* (1Ā) in the sense of 'to creep in' or 'conceal oneself among' (loc.) (Monier Williams). Śivopādhyāya supplies additional meanings.

Once abandoned meditation and the one who meditates in accord with the teaching of the treatises on yoga (*yogaśāstra*). (The yogi's) contemplation (*bhāvanā*), which is the purification (*saṃskāra*) (that takes place by) repose in the state in the centre, 'blossoms forth' to a most excellent degree (*atiśayena*), that is, intensely. This is because the goal is repose in the Central Abode, which is devoid of the support of an object of meditation. (This happens) **'by virtue of (the emptiness of) the state (free of thought) in the centre'** between the two conditions (*bhāva*) namely, manifest and unmanifest, by resting in the Central Abode, the nature of which is something (undefinable). Thus, the meaning is that there would be a state of repose in the centre the nature of which is the pure consciousness of the one perceiver who contemplates and conjoins (*anusaṃdhātṛ*) those two as the one who pervades the condition (*daśā*) at the beginning, middle and end of the two states, manifest and unmanifest.

Discussion

This meditation, along with the previous one, is cited by Jayaratha in TĀv 1/83cd-85ab (84cd-86ab). They are indeed complementary meditations that practiced together alternately, reinforce one another. Thus, we can just as well read them together as essentially teaching just one meditation as follows:

'When perceiving two entities, having meditated (on the emptiness) that is the centre between both of them, (the yogi) should rest (there). And (then), having abandoned the two simultaneously (at once), Reality shines (there) in the centre. When one thing has been concealed (*tyakte*) (or abandoned), and consciousness has been (firmly) checked, it should not move on to something (*bhāva*) else. Then meditation (*bhāvanā*) blossoms forth intensely (*ati*) by virtue of (the emptiness of) the state (free of thought) in the centre (between) them (*tanmadhyabhāvena*)."[151]

The commentators understand the word '*bhāva*' here to mean any phenomenal entity. In that case, the practice is to allow one's attention to desist from attending to some entity and prevent it from moving on to attend to another, as normally happens in the course of perception. However, Abhinava perceives another dimension of this practice by understanding the word '*bhāva*'

[151] VBh 61–62 (60–61).

to mean 'state' not just 'entity'. The two states are the polarities, as it were of the inscrutable pulse of consciousness. One is its abiding tranquil repose within itself. The other is its emergence out of itself into cosmic manifestation. These are the two aspects of emission (*visarga*) experienced in every timeless moment in the immediacy of the present. It is experienced 'physically' in the climax of orgasm at the microcosmic level and as the union of transcendental Śiva and cosmic Śakti at the universal ultimate level. In this perspective, the meditation (*dhāraṇa*) Abhinava teaches is that:

'The fortunate one should enter into the unconditioned Abode of Emission by carefully attending (*parikathayā*) to the coming into being (*bhāva*) and falling away (*vilaya*) of the state of tranquillity and emergence (which, for want of better words, are said to be) 'like this' and 'like that.'[152]

Śiva is the quiescent Light of consciousness and Śakti is the perpetually emergent awareness of its universal nature as all things. The practice in these terms is to focus on one or the other as both and yet seemingly neither, as the perpetual, timeless dynamism of the pulse of 'the arising and non-arising of the two forms (of consciousness) which are 'tranquillity and emergence'.[153] This explanation presumes that the *Vijñānabhairava* understands ultimate reality, which is the consciousness that is Deity, as dynamic stillness. If this is the view of the Master, it would not be surprising that Kṣemarāja promoted the same exegetical model.

Everything is Consciousness (63 (62)–64)

39) The body and the universe are made of consciousness

सर्वं देहं चिन्मयं हि जगद्वा परिभावयेत् ।
युगपन्निर्विकल्पेन मनसा परमोदयः ॥ ६३ ॥

sarvaṃ dehaṃ cinmayaṃ hi jagad vā paribhāvayet |
yugapan nirvikalpena manasā[154] *paramodayaḥ* || 63 ||

One should reflect all at once (simultaneously) with the mind free of thought that all the body or the universe is just (*hi*) made of consciousness; (thus the yogi attains) the supreme Awakening! (63) (62)

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[152] TĀ 29/118cd-119ab.

[153] TĀv ad 29/118cd-119ab.

[154] Śivopādhyāya reads *mānasā*.

Word-for-word meaning: *paribhāvayet* one should reflect *yugapan* all at once (simultaneously) *manasā* with the mind *nirvikalpena* free of thought *sarvaṃ* all *dehaṃ* the body *vā* or *jagad* the universe *hi* (is) just *cinmayaṃ* made of consciousness *paramodayaḥ* (thus he attains) the supreme Awakening.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

One should reflect that all this universe (and the body) from the feet up to the hair (on one's head) is consciousness. The supreme state (*gati*) of the mind (develops) by the instantaneous (*akrameṇa*) pervasion of the wonder of vibrantly radiant consciousness. The sense is that it is the most excellent state.

Śivopādhyāya

One should reflect '**all at once**', instantaneously (*akrameṇa*), that all the body from the feet up to the hair (on one's head) is made of consciousness, that is, that each part (of it) is consciousness alone. Or else, (one should reflect) all at once (simultaneously) on all the universe with a mind free of thought constructs, all around, inside and outside as pervaded by the wonder of vibrantly radiant consciousness. 'The appearing ((*prakāśamānaṃ*) literally 'shining' of things) is not separate from the light (of consciousness)'[155] because (if it were to be) otherwise, it would not be possible to perceive (anything) objectively. Thus, one should reflect that, in accord with this line of reasoning, the light (of consciousness) shines (as all things).

Discussion

Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in his commentary on *Śivasūtra* 1/16, which declares, 'Or (the yogi can realise Śiva) by contemplating the Pure Principle.' (*śuddhatattvasaṃdhānād vā*). According to Bhāskara, this means that: 'The pure unconditioned Principle is the Light called Śiva. The contemplation of that (principle) is the reflective awareness (*vimarśa*) of one's own identity with it by virtue of which the obscuring darkness (of false egoity) may also be rent asunder because it is the one perfectly full reality. (Thus), by abandoning

[155] The full verse is quoted by Ānandabhaṭṭa ad v 137 (135).

one's external (limited) egoity, one's own authentic state (*nijasthiti*) (abides) unbroken (*akhaṇḍita*).'

40) Meditating on the Emptiness where the breaths unite

वायुद्वयस्य संघट्टादन्तर्वा बहिरन्ततः ।
योगी समत्वविज्ञानसमुद्गमनभाजनम् ॥ ६४ ॥

vāyudvayasya saṃghaṭṭāt antar vā bahir antataḥ |
yogī samatvavijñānasamudgamanabhājanam || 64 ||

By the dynamic union (*saṃghaṭṭa*) of the two breaths, either within (the heart) or outside (in the End of the Twelve, meditating on the emptiness there), in the end, the yogi becomes the vessel of the emergence of the knowledge (that perceives) the equality (of all things). (64) (64)

Word-for-word meaning: *saṃghaṭṭāt* by the dynamic union *vāyudvayasya* of the two breaths *antar* within (the heart) *vā* or *bahir* outside (in the End of the Twelve) *antataḥ* in the end *yogi* the yogi (becomes) *samatvavijñānasamudgamanabhājanam* the vessel of the emergence of the knowledge (that perceives) the equality (of all things).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By conjoining the (breath consisting of) exhalation and inhalation in the Heart and in the End of the Twelve when entering and exiting, 'in the end', the yogi is well awake by virtue of the knowledge (that perceives) the equality (of all things) and (he is) the vessel of (its) emergence. (His) field is that of the exhaled and inhaled etc. breath that culminates in the Secret Place (of the Heart). This is the overall sense. By virtue of that, he possesses the supreme accomplishment (*siddhi*). This is the meaning.

Śivopādhyāya

'Within' the heart and 'outside' in the End of the Twelve, 'in the end' of the entry and exit (of the breath), the exhaled and inhaled breaths are in dynamic union and no difference manifests (between them). Once the (yogi) has meditated on the Void in which the exit and entrance (of the breath) have been eliminated, the equality of his vision arises.

The Experience of Bliss (65–67)

41) The body and universe are full of bliss

सर्वं जगत्स्वदेहं वा स्वानन्दभरितं स्मरेत् ।
युगपन्स्वामृतेनैव परानन्दमयो भवेत् ॥ ६५ ॥

sarvaṃ jagat svadehaṃ vā svānandabharitaṃ smaret |
yugapan svāmṛtenaiva parānandamayo bhavet || 65 ||

(The yogi) should recollect that the whole universe or his own body is filled all at once (simultaneously) with his own (innate) bliss. (Then), by the nectar of his own (innate nature) alone, he becomes supreme bliss. (65) (63)

Word-for-word meaning: *smaret* (The yogi) should recollect *sarvaṃ* the whole *jagat* universe *vā* or *svadehaṃ* his own body *svānandabharitaṃ* is filled with his own bliss *yugapan* all at once (simultaneously) *svāmṛtenaiva* by the nectar of his own (innate nature) alone *bhavet* he becomes *parānandamayo* supreme bliss.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Indeed, (it is taught in the Upaniṣads), these beings are born from bliss and it is in bliss that they continue to exist and are dissolved away. The sense is that by such a vision (of things the yogi) has achieved the goal.

Śivopādhyāya

(One who is) **'filled with his own innate bliss'** has renounced the pleasure of the objects of sense and is **'filled'** 'by the nectar', which is his own (innate) bliss. He should think that everything is **'filled with his own (innate) bliss'**, that is, full of the bliss of his own consciousness. The Vedic *Vājasaneya-brāhmaṇa* (declares):

'This (world) is full (and complete) as is that (transcendent reality). The full (and complete) arises from the full (and complete). Taking the full from what is full, only the full remains.'

Here (according to our view) it is because the universe also, which is the condensed juice (of the aesthetic delight) of consciousness, mani-

fests and so 'all the body is made of consciousness ...'[156] This is the difference between (this and) the previous meditation on the light (of consciousness).

Discussion

Kṣemarāja associates the meditation taught here with ŚSū 1/19 that teaches: 'The bliss of the Light is the joy of contemplation.' (*lokānandaḥ samādhi-sukham*). Bhāskara comments: 'The supreme, pure light of consciousness which is as if inwardly and externally manifest (*udita*) is the eternal and Ubiquitous Lord (*vibhu*) Who is all things and their essential nature as well as their arising (*sarvabhāvodbhava*). Know that to be the Light. It is that which is said to be Bliss. This radiant, unconditioned nature, which shines at one with the light of consciousness, is called the 'joy of contemplation' because it attends one-pointedly and solely to its relish. Or else the joy of contemplation is said to be the delight inherent in one's own nature (*svapramoda*) (present) in the two states, subject and object, which unfold together as one.'

Kṣemarāja also associates this *sūtra* with the following set of meditations taught in the *Vijñānabhairava* dedicated to the spiritual experience of aesthetic delight. We will quote just the first two of five. The reader can refer to them further ahead:

'(The yogi) should contemplate (*bhāvayed*) the state (of spiritual) plenitude (he experiences brought about) by the unfolding of the joy which is the savor (of the aesthetic delight) of the outpouring (of consciousness) brought about by eating and drinking. From that there is great bliss. The yogi who (experiences) the oneness of the unparalleled joy of savoring singing and other such (beautiful) objects (of sense, his) mind fixed (and well concentrated on that) becomes of that same (blissful) nature (as the Brahman) by identifying with it (*tanmayatvena*).'[157]

Kṣemarāja also relates the meditation taught in this verse with ŚSū 3/39 that teaches: 'That which is preceded by the three states, vitalizes them.' (*tripadādyanuprāṇanam*)

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[156] Above, v 63a.

[157] VBh 72–73 (71–72) Kṣemarāja quotes verses 72–76 (71–75).

Bhāskara explains: 'That which is preceded by the three states is the Fourth (state of pure consciousness), which is preceded by the states of waking (dreaming and deep sleep) and is said to be the fullness (of consciousness that permeates all three) simultaneously. (All) existing things are rightly vitalized by it in the sense that it infuses its own inherent power (into them).'

42) The arising of great bliss by means of a trick

कुहनेन प्रयोगेन सद्य एव मृगेक्षणे ।
समुदेति महानन्दो येन तत्त्वं प्रकाशते ॥ ६६ ॥

kuhanena prayogena sadya eva mṛgekṣaṇe |
samudeti mahānando yena tattvaṃ prakāśate || 66 ||

O gazelle-eyed (goddess), by applying the trick (of tickling under the armpits), great bliss arises all of a sudden (*sadyas*) due to which (the supreme) reality manifests. (66) (65)

Word-for-word meaning: *mṛgekṣaṇe* O gazelle-eyed (goddess) *kuhanena prayogena* by applying the trick (of tickling under the armpits) *sadya eva* all of a sudden *samudeti* arises *mahānando* supreme bliss *yena* due to which *tattvaṃ* (the supreme) reality *prakāśate* manifests.

Swami Lakshmanjoo (2002: p. 72) explains: 'When someone tickles you under the armpits and you laugh, you laugh wildly without any limit and there you have to see where this laughter comes from. If actually this laughter was blissful, why do you hate it? So, there is something unknown to you that makes you laugh, otherwise, you are worried by that. Are you not worried? Why do you laugh? You ought to weep, but you do not weep, you laugh. So, you must find the source of that laughter and there and then the supreme bliss shines forth by which your own self is revealed.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By the performance of a marvellous magic trick (*māyā*) and the like that astonishes (those who see it), the supreme bliss made of (that) marvellous performance arises. This is the overall sense. What remains (to complete the sense is that) in accord with the teaching that "I myself am the Supreme Haṃsa ..." just

by the tactile sensation (like that of an) ant (crawling on the skin), (the yogi experiences) the pervasion of the supreme dawning (of pure consciousness).

Śivopādhyāya

The performance of a magic trick elicits wonder **'all of a sudden'**. When viewing the performance of a magic trick, it elicits a state of extreme astonishment (at the sight of, for example) a person standing amidst the beautiful flowers and trees in an illusory garden created by magic, who, for his own delectation, severs a limb from his own (body and) then connects it again (to it). (At the sight of that) the yogi's state free of thought constructs (arises) at that very moment. This is the meaning.

Now, the pervasion of supreme bliss arises by itself (spontaneously) at the time when one is practicing the yoga that is the procedure used to sever the movement of the exhaled and inhaled breath. If that happens, he imparts the teaching concerning that.

Discussion

We have seen that Swamijī explains that the 'trick' meant here is to tickle somebody under the armpits. In this he agrees with Jayaratha. In chapter five of the *Tantrāloka*, Abhinava presents a series of yogic practices designed to induce entry into the Heart of consciousness (TĀ 5/71cd-72ab). One of these meditations is taught succinctly with the words '(he should enter the Heart) at the tip'. Jayaratha explains that 'at the tip' means (at some) extremity (of the body), like the armpits, where by gently touching with the tips of the fingers, it gives rise to great bliss.' He goes on to quote this verse from the *Vijñānabhairava*. Clearly, Jayaratha understood the practice in some similar way. The practice here according to him is to penetrate into the bliss of consciousness through the pleasure of a gentle caress. It is not by tickling. Even so, we are not far from Swamijī's explanation of this practice. However, these practices are not perceived by either of the two commentators who both understand the word *'kuhana'*, which literally means 'deceit', to mean a conjuring trick and so I have translated accordingly. Thus, according to Śivopādhyāya, the *Vijñānabhairava* is referring to any magic trick that astonishes one who sees it. This surprise or sense of wonder is an occasion to experience consciousness free of thought constructs.

43) The blissful sensation like of an ant crawling on the skin by the ascent of the power of the vital breath

सर्वस्रोतोनिबन्धेन प्राणशक्त्योर्ध्वया शनैः ।
पिपीलस्पर्शवेलायां प्रथते परमं सुखम् ॥ ६७ ॥

sarvasrotonibandhena prāṇaśaktyordhvayā śanaiḥ |
pipīlasparśavelāyāṃ prathate paramaṃ sukham || 67 ||

When (the yogi) feels a tactile sensation (like the crawling) of an ant (on the skin), due to the slow upward elevation of the energy of the vital breath brought about by checking all the currents (of the senses), he experiences supreme bliss. (67) (66)

Word-for-word meaning: *pipīlasparśavelāyāṃ* when (the yogi) feels a tactile sensation (like the crawling) of an ant (on the skin) *śanaiḥ* due to the slow *prāṇaśaktyordhvayā* upward elevation of the energy of the vital breath *sarvasrotonibandhena* brought about by checking all the currents (of the senses) *prathate* he experiences *paramaṃ* supreme *sukham* bliss.

Swamijī: 'If the elevated energy of *prāṇa* is not functioning, these flows of the cognitive senses cannot be checked. These flows of the cognitive senses will be checked only by adjusting the elevated energy of *prāṇaśakti*, not the individual energy of *prāṇaśakti*.[158] The elevated energy of *prāṇaśakti* means one-pointed *prāṇaśakti*, when the *prāṇaśakti* is without the movement of thought.' (p. 121) 'When you breathe, or breathe in and out, you breathe in and out without any thought, without any impressions of outward movements, that is the energy of *prāṇaśakti*. *Prāṇaśakti* becomes *śakti*.' (p. 124) 'That leads to the rise of *kuṇḍalinī*. That is *pipīlasparśa* [the touch of an ant]. And that *kuṇḍalinī* rises very minutely there.' (p. 125) This is *citkuṇḍalinī* that is rising gradually. It is firm movement of *nīmilana*—not in a flash. *Āṇavopāya* moves quickly to *Śāmbhavopāya*.'

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[158] Note that Swamijī says that the activity of the senses are blocked by the upward movement of the power of the vital breath. However, both commentators agree that it is the other way around. The vital breath is induced to rise by blocking the senses. Either way, it is by the combination of both that the yogi experiences the rise of Kuṇḍalinī as a subtle tactile sensation.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By blocking the five senses, genitals and anus by means of the gradual upward flow of the power of the vital breath from the foundation up to the End of the Twelve (then): '**when (the yogi) feels a tactile sensation (like the crawling) of ants, he experiences supreme bliss.**' The meaning is that by this meditation (*bhāvanā*), (the yogi) rests (*ārāma*) inwardly. The tactile sensation of the breath, as it moves slowly from the location of the Root Foundation (*mūlādhāra*) up to the location beginning with the Bulb (of the genitals), is like that of an ant in the End of the Twelve when one is experiencing the Self (*ātmaviṣaya*). At that time, yogis examine and determine how the breath, having risen from one place, reaches another. The sense is that by this kind of meditation (*bhāvanā*), (the yogi) attains the bliss as taught (here).

Śivopādhyāya[159]

By blocking the ears, eyes, nose, mouth, genitals and anus by the gradual upward flow of the power of the vital breath from the foundation up to the End of the Twelve (then): At the time 'when' (the yogi) is experiencing the Self (*ātmaviṣaya*) is the occasion when he 'feels a tactile sensation like (the crawling) of an ant'. The tactile sensation of the breath, as it moves slowly like an ant from the genitals (*janmāgra*) etc., is the tactile sensation of the locations of the Root and Bulb etc. At that time, yogis examine (and determine) how the breath once risen from one location has now reached another. Here (with reference to this), the venerable lord Patañjali has taught the method of the discipline of Yoga (*yogaśāstra*) (saying):

'The modality (*vṛtti*) of blocking the outer and inner (breath), well examined (in terms of) place, time and number (of the breathing becomes) long and subtle.'[160]

The dynamic gait (*gati*) of exhalation and inhalation, which are the qualities of the exhaled and inhaled breaths, possesses (their) own natural flow

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[159] Śivopādhyāya initially virtually reproduces Ānandabhaṭṭa's commentary and then goes on to describe the practice of *prāṇāyāma* he says is being taught here. It is an elaborate process of rising from one inner centre to the next in consonance with the breath retentions and movements of the breath at each place.

[160] YSū 2/50 *bāhyābhyantarastambhavṛttir deśakālasaṃkhyābhiḥ paridṛṣṭo dīrghasūkṣmaḥ |*

which differs from an individual's exertion. Breath control (*prāṇāyāma*) is the severance (of that flow) and (its) blockage, whether gradual or sudden, is brought about by a particular exertion (applied) by the individual (practicing it). That being so, it is said that: 'breath control is the severance of the movement (*gati*) of exhalation and inhalation.'[161]

The filling (of the lungs) (*pūraka*) is the outer modality and is such because it (involves) blocking the outwardly (directed) motion (of the regulated breath). The ejection (*recaka*) (of the breath) is its internal modality and is such because it (involves) blocking the inwardly (directed) motion (of the breath).[162] Some refer to 'ejection' with the word 'external' and 'filling' with the word 'internal'. The simultaneous checking of both movements (of the breath in and out) is 'blockage' and its modality is 'breath retention' (*kumbhaka*). That is stated (as follows):

'(In the case) where both exhalation and inhalation cease by (exerting) the effort to restrain (them) just once, it does not (involve), as before, the restraint of the effort (to impel) the flux that fills (the breath), nor also the restraint of the effort (to impel) the flux (of the breath to) eject (it). Rather, just as water placed on a heated stone evaporates (similarly in the course of breath restraint), it contracts in all respects.'

Such is the case with this flowing breath. (If its) activity is checked by a strong effort to block it, it stays within the body in a subtle form. It certainly does not 'fill' so that (it would be) the 'filling' (breath) (*pūraka*), nor is it ejected (so) that (it would be) the 'ejected' (breath) (*recaka*). This breath control is of three kinds, 'examined (in terms of) 1) location, 2) time and 3) number, it is called 'long and subtle'.' Just like a dense, thick ball (of clay) that, (kneaded and) extended, is (less) compact and so (becomes) long and subtle. The same (happens) with the vital breath also. Practicing by increasing the time (of its stay in a particular) location, and number, (the breath becomes) long and because it is (then) hard to perceive, it becomes subtle also. (These three parameters are as follows):

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[161] YSū 2/49 *śvāsapraśvāsayoḥ gativicchedalakṣaṇaḥ prāṇāyāmaḥ* |

[162] In other words, forced inhalation is brought about by blocking the outward movement of the breath. This is called 'filling'—*pūraka*. Forced exhalation is brought about by blocking the inward movement of the breath. This is called 'ejection'—*recaka*. Cf. Above Śivopādhyāya's commentary on VBh 25.

1) **Location.** (This is reckoned) as follows. The exhaled breath, coming out of the heart, comes to an end in the location which is at a distance of twelve fingers in front of the tip of the nose. Then, having turned back, it enters up to the heart. This is the natural movement of exhalation and inhalation. By practice it exits, successively, from the navel or the foundation and comes to an end in a place (located) at a (distance of) twenty-four fingers from the end of the nose or else at the end of thirty-six fingers' space. Similarly, one should understand (the phase of) entry also to be such. There (in that case) one should consider the pervasion of the outer place to be (like) the movement of a small tuft of reeds in a place where there is no wind. Inwardly, one should reflect on it as a (subtle) tactile sensation, similar to that of an ant's touch. This is the examination of place.
2) **Time.** Again, a moment (*kṣaṇa*) is the quarter of the time it takes for an eyelid to close. One should pay attention to their (i.e. the moments') extent, having touched (and meditated) on the sphere of one's own knees for three (moments).

   A 'measure' (*mātrā*) is the time it takes to snap the fingers. The first (kind of) breath control (*udghāta*) is weak and (done) with thirty-six of these (measures). This same one doubled is the middle one and, tripled, intense. Breath control (*udghāta*) is said to be the destruction within the head of the wind that, impelled from the root of the navel, is being expelled. This is the examination of time.
3) **Number.** The examination of number (can be the type in which the number of) repetitions of the recitation of the syllable OṂ (is counted) or by counting (the number of times) the breath enters. Although one does not perceive the pervasion of places when the breath is retained (*kumbhaka*), even so, one does perceive the pervasion of time and number.

(The breath) is practiced daily as the sequence of a day, lunar fortnight, month etc. It extends in terms of the pervasion of the accumulation of locations and time, and, by attaining supreme skill (in the practice), it also (becomes) subtle. The meditation of the breath as becoming (progressively more) subtle has as its purpose, the tranquility of the mind. By the tranquility of the mind, the breath (becomes) tranquil. By the tranquility of the breath, thought constructs wane away. Thus, the purpose of (this) painful yoga is the attainment of the state free of thought constructs. Let this suffice.

That is said (with the words) **'when (the yogi) feels a tactile sensation (like the crawling) of an ant (on the skin).'** By examining the place and time (of the breath), he attains supreme bliss. This is the meaning.

(Now) he teaches the means to contract and expand the power (of consciousness) which is the cause of (its) expansion in the centre (*madhyavikāsa*).

Discussion

We have seen that the sound and resonance of OṀ traverses twelve stages.[163] According to the *Svacchandatantra*, which, along with the *Netratantra*, is the main authority here, the experience of the Pervasive One is the tenth stage, just before the last two stages, that is, With Mind (*samanā*) and Beyond Mind (*unmanā*). It is the experience of the pervasive presence of consciousness which is like the subtle touch of ants crawling on the skin. Here it appears to be all over the body, but elsewhere it is specified as the experience of the vital breath flowing through the Cavity of Brahmā. The text says:

'Having pierced through (the plane of) Śakti[164] then, O Goddess, what remains is the Pervasive One. The experience there is that of a tactile sensation like an ant (crawling on the skin).' SvT 4/384.

After the category (called) Śakti, the reality that remains, which is a part of the (resonance of) Mantra, is the Pervasive One. It is a limb of Mantra so called because it pervades all the Path ending with Śakti. A clear reading is 'what remains is the Pervasive One'. The experience there is a perception of touch because it pervades the tranquil sound (of Mantra). It like an ant. The meaning is that (the sensation is) like ants crawling around (on the skin).[165]

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[163] These twelve are A U M, the Point, the Half Moon, the Obstructress, Sound, the End of Sound, Śakti, the Pervasive One, With Mind and Beyond Mind. See above VBh 42 and commentaries.

[164] Śakti here is one of the twelve planes of the development of Sound.

[165] *śaktiṃ bhitvā tato devi yac cheṣaṃ vyāpinī bhavet |*
anubhāvo bhavet tatra sparśo yadvat pipīlikā || SvT 4/384 ||
śaktibhedānantaraṃ yanmantrāvayavarūpaṃ vastu śeṣam iti śiṣyamāṇaṃ tad vyāpinī bhavet, śaktyantasarvādhvavyāpanād vyāpiny ākhyo mantrāvayavaḥ saḥ | tacchеṣe vyāpinī bhavet iti tu spaṣṭaḥ pāṭhaḥ | tatra cānubhavaḥ praśāntaśabdavyāptikatvāt sparśaprathārūpaḥ |
yadvat pipīliketi sañcarantīnāṃ pipīlikānām ivety arthaḥ ||

Similarly, we read in the *Mālinīvijayottara*:

'The yogi in a (quiet) solitary (place), his eyes wide open (gazing at the sky), sees something like autumn clouds at the juncture of the day. Placing his attention there for ten days, he sees very subtle points (of light) there. Some of those are white, red, and blue, others yellow. Having seen them, (the yogi) attentive to nothing else, should fix his mind there intensely. In six months very many beautiful forms (appear) within them.'

Then (the Tantra continues): 'He should meditate on the Self located within a six-sided *maṇḍala*. Like red collyrium, each part is full of pulsing flames of light (*sphuritākula*). Then O Goddess, in ten days, (he experiences) the touch of ants (crawling) all over (his) skin. Then, mediating on that, he attains an adamantine body and having done so, he attains what was mentioned previously as before.'[166]

In the following meditations that conclude with verse 74, the same principle is applied common to most if not all the meditations. This is the fundamental premise that by *bhāvanā*, the strong-minded and determined yogi can make the transition from the object on which he meditates to the ultimate unconditioned reality that it represents. Here, the object is the delight everybody normally experiences when making love (68–70). This is of a piece with the joy of seeing an old friend and close relative (71), the pleasure of drinking and eating good food (72), and the joy of music (73). The Tantra concludes

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[166] *ekāntastho yadā yogī vinirmilitalocanaḥ* |
śaratsandhyābhrasaṅkāśaṃ yat tat kiñcit prapaśyati ||
tatra cetaḥ samādhāya yāvad āste daśāhnikam |
tāvat prapaśyate tatra bindūn sūkṣmatamān api ||
kecit tatra sitā raktā nīlāḥ pītās tathāpare |
tān dṛṣṭvā tatra sandadhyāc ceto 'tyantam ananyadhīḥ ||
ṣaṇmāsāt paśyate teṣu rūpāṇi subahūnyapi | MV 14/20–23ab
tathā ----
ṣaṭkoṇamaṇḍalāntaḥstham ātmānaṃ paribhāvayet |
rūkṣam añjanasaṅkāśaṃ pratyaṃśaṃ sphuritākulam ||
tato 'sya daśabhir devi divasais tvaci sarvataḥ |
bhavet pipīlikāsparśas tatas tad anucintayan ||
vajradehatvam āsādya pūrvoktaṃ pūrvavat labhet | MV 14/29–31ab quoted in the commentary on SvT 12/95cd-98ab

that a true yogi should focus his mind wherever it finds satisfaction and pleasure. His *bhāvanā* (meditative ideation) is that it is, as are all things, a portal through which to enter into the state of *nirvikalpa* and so experience and be the Lord who is Consciousness.

Verses 68 to 70 are meditations practiced while experiencing sexual arousal and ultimately orgasm, both with a partner and alone. In the course of common daily life, the sense of touch is generally the least prominent of the five senses, whereas it becomes powerfully dominant in the course of this practice. Accordingly, these meditations are introduced by one, on the sense of touch, in the course of which the yogi focuses on the Deity of Consciousness, rather than just physical pleasure, and experiences it as the pervasive presence of the Deity. Unlike the other senses, that are each in their own particular location, the sense of touch pervades the body. Thus, it corresponds appropriately to the experience of the energy of consciousness called Pervasive (*vyāpinī*). When this temporary state expands to its fullest degree into permanence, it is the Great Pervasion (*mahāvyāpti*) of the liberated state.

Meditations when making Love (68–70 (69))

44) Placing the mind between Fire and Poison

वह्नेर्विषस्य मध्ये तु चित्तं सुखमयं क्षिपेत् ।
केवलं वायुपूर्णं वा स्मरानन्देन युज्यते ॥ ६८ ॥

vahner viṣasya madhye tu cittaṃ sukhamayaṃ kṣipet |
kevalaṃ vāyupūrṇaṃ vā smarānandena yujyate || 68 ||

(When making love), one should place one's mind made of bliss in the middle (between the) 'Fire' (of the arousal of passion at the beginning) and the 'Poison' (of the pervasive consciousness of its appeasement at the end). Or else, filled only with the vital breath, (the mind) should be united with the bliss of passion (*smarānanda*) (which is the bliss of consciousness generated by the union of Śiva and Śakti). (68)

Word-for-word meaning: (When making love) *kṣipet* one should place *cittaṃ* (one's) mind *sukhamayaṃ* made of bliss *madhye* in the middle (between) *vahner* Fire *viṣasya* (and) Poison *vā* Or else *kevalaṃ* only *vāyupūrṇaṃ* filled with the vital breath *yujyate* (the mind) should be united *smarānandena* with the bliss of passion.

Swamijī explains the sexual yoga taught in this meditation as follows: 'When you are in the sexual act (*viṣa tattva*) and you are elevated and situated in the expansion of your nature, then at that very moment of union you will gain entry into *Kuṇḍalinī*. If, however, you are given to the sexual act, then this sexual act will cause you to fall. This is also *viṣa tattva*, but in that case, you are carried away from your nature. So, in *viṣa tattva*, when in that act, you do not get entry into your nature, that act is poison for you. For those who are elevated, this same poison is actually ecstasy (*amṛta*)'[167]

Elsewhere, Swamijī explains this meditation as follows: *smarānanda* is the bliss of, joy of, the sexual act. But in fact, you must not take it that way. You must see it as the *ānanda* that arises in the union of Śiva and Śakti ... *Rudrayāmala*. This is *cidānanda* [the bliss of consciousness] i.e. *nimīlana* [introverted contemplation] ... When you are not married [and experiencing sexual arousal alone], you put your mind rested between will and knowledge. When you are married, you can put your mind in (between) the beginning of the sex excitement and in the end when it is appeased'

'*kevalaṃ vāyupūrṇaṃ vā*—don't let your breath move out. There, you must not let your breath move out. If you let your breath move out—after this act, or after this state—if you leave your breath out and in, you are gone, you have not achieved anything. You have to maintain the breath inside. You won't die; there you won't die'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By this meditation, that is, (this) meditation on the bliss (experienced) in the 'Fire' (of the arousal of passion at the beginning) or the 'Poison' (of the pervasive consciousness of its appeasement at the end), which is harder (*kaṭhinatara*), one must place the mind (there) by meditating on (this) bliss. Or else also in the centre between exhalation and inhalation (the mind) is united with the bliss of passion that makes one forget all the objects of sense,[68] when meditating on passion, all objects of sense are forgotten. 'Or else filled only with the vital breath,' even though there is no breath control. There (in that case) also, non-duality is realized by the falling away of duality.

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[167] Self Realization in Kashmir Śaivism 1994: 102 footnotes 13 and 14.

[168] Read *kāmānandena sarvaviṣayavismārakena* for *kāmānande sarvaviṣayavismārake na* cf. Śivopādhyāya *kāmānandena yujyate*.

This is the sense (of this statement). For, as those who know ultimate reality (maintain), the meditation on bliss when experiencing pleasure[169] in Fire and Poison etc., is the ultimate reality. It is said that the experience of bliss (a man has when sexually aroused), with a woman or without union with a woman, is itself the ultimate reality. He teaches more (in the next meditation).

Śivopādhyāya

(When making love), one should place the mind made of bliss in the middle (between the) 'Fire' (of the arousal of passion at the beginning) and the 'Poison' (of the pervasive consciousness of its appeasement at the end). Or else, filled only with the vital breath, (the mind) should be united with the bliss of passion (*smarānanda*) (which in reality is the bliss of consciousness generated by the union of Śiva and Śakti).

'Fire' is the plane of contraction (of the power of the vital breath) that takes place by the process of entry (into a state of consciousness free of thought constructs). The location of 'Poison' is the plane of expansion (of the power of the vital breath) that takes place by means of spreading forth (of emission) (*prasarayuktyā*).

(One must first experience) the state of contraction, that is, the repose of that (vital force) on the plane of upper Kuṇḍalinī attained by the process of piercing (the dam between) the eyebrows,[170] by the subtle power of the vital breath that unfolds as the upward pulsation (of consciousness) above the nasal cavity.

Having prepared the power of the vital breath within the lower Kuṇḍalinī in the secret foundation (of the genitals), which is the sixth mouth (of the Yoginī), (consciousness enters a state of) expansion (*vikāsa*) in the form of the spreading forth (of emission) that takes place as the contemplative penetration (*āveśa*) into the tactile sensation (experienced) on the plane of its root, tip (*agra*) and centre. 'One should (then) place', that is, imagine, 'the mind made of bliss' by means of meditation (*bhāvanā*) in the middle, (between the) 'Fire' (of the arousal of desire at the beginning) and the 'Poison' (of the pervasive consciousness of its appeasement at the end), that is, in the central channel (of the vital breath) which is the knot of emanation (*sṛṣṭigranthi*).

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[169] Read *sukhe* for *duḥkhe* which clearly makes no sense here.

[170] See above VBh 31.

Once given up meditation on the exit and entry of the breath, (then), by virtue of this meditation one should place the mind made of bliss into the Lord who is the expansion (of consciousness) that, in centre (between the two breaths), is the cause of (their) going and coming and the one who fuses the two into one. '**(Or) else filled only with the vital breath**', without (any) relation to the sphere (of its) ascent and descent. (It is) filled with the energy of the vital breath, which is the energy of Unstruck Sound (*anackakalā*) that, located in the central channel, is uttered (upwards all at once) instantaneously (*akramoccāra*). After that, (the mind) becomes the bliss of passion (*smarānanda*) and is united with the bliss of passion. The bliss of passion is greater than (any) other (kind of) bliss because due to that, one forgets all objects of sense (and so is the most excellent focus of the transformative meditation that leads to *nirvikalpa*).

Or else (there is another explanation). 'Fire' is above the genitals and four finger (breadths) below the navel. There, (at the inner mouth of the womb at the tip of the inserted penis), is a support of the breath called 'Fire', which is counted amongst the sixteen supports of the breath. One should know that a foundation of the breath called 'Poison' is in middle of the genitals. The mind made of bliss is placed in the middle between these two supports of the breath. Yogis' traditional teaching declares that (only that) meditation should be practiced which is of the kind that has been heard (by word of mouth) and understood (*mata*). Thus, one attains the bliss of passion (*kāmānanda*). The sixteen seats are taught in the Kula tradition[171] as, for example, (in the passage beginning with):

'One should know that Kula is below the genitals. In between the two is that which is called 'Poison'. It is said, that it is Power that impels the Point and Sound (corresponding to exhalation and inhalation) in the base (of the genital in union). Then, that which is called 'fire' is four finger (breadths) above (that). There is a foundation of the breath below the navel and (one) in the navel itself, which is called 'the jar'.'

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[171] These lines are at the beginning of a passage quoted by Kṣemarāja in NTu ad 7/1cd-5. He introduces it as saying that this is part of Kula practice (*kulaprakriyā*). This is the Kaula version of the Sixteen Supports (*ādhāra*) arranged along the axis of the subtle body. See Dyzkowski 2007: 9, 108 ff.

Discussion

The word *viṣa* literally means 'poison'. It is derived from the root *viṣḷ*, in the sense of 'pervasion' (*vyāp*). Poison pervades the body. The name of the deity Viṣṇu, is derived from the same root and so literally means 'the Pervasive One'. Accordingly, Kṣemarāja, in the course of his commentary on his *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya*, quotes VBh 68. There, he derives the word *viṣa* in this way as relating to the pervasion (*vyāpti*) of the expansion (*vikāsa*) or extending flow (*prasara*) of consciousness. 'Fire' denotes the opposite polarity, which is the contraction and withdrawal of objectivity back into consciousness[172] consumed by the Fire of subjectivity.

We find similar meditations in other sources making use of the same terminology with the same association with yogic sexual union. One is the *Kulagahvara*[173] that Abhinava quotes and briefly glosses in chapter three of the *Tantrāloka* as saying:

> 'The plenitude of Passion is the Principle (*kāmatattva*) experienced in (sexual) union, (whereas) the Principle of the Nectar of Poison (*viṣatattva*) (is experienced) when the obscuration it brings about falls away from the individual soul. Poison (*viṣa*) is an all-pervasive power and so obscures the glory (of the individual soul) who is not pervasive. The Stainless (*nirañjana*) is the Supreme Abode, while its principle (is the powerholder) who is 'stained' (*sāñjana*) (that is, made manifest). This is because it is from that the cosmic nature (*viṣvamaya*), which is the power of action, manifests. Passion is the will, Poison is knowledge, and the goddess of action is the Stainless. Penetration (*samāveṣa*) into this triad is said to be Śiva (the transcendent) and Bhairava (the immanent).'[174]

The Centre is the Supreme Abode. It is identified as the Stainless One (Nirañjana). The two polarities that encompass the Centre and flow around it

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[172] *atra vahniḥ anupraveśakrameṇa saṃkocabhūḥ viṣasthānam prasarayuktyā vikāsapadam viṣḷṛ vyāptau iti arthānugamāt* | *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya* p. 44.

[173] This Tantra is the source of a brilliant passage concerning the modalities of initiation by piercing (*vedhadīkṣā*) that characterizes Kaula initiation in general. It is quoted in TĀ 29/239cd-241ab, 243cd-252. The same passage is also found in the MBT KuKh 31/11cd-26. The reader is referred to the notes there for details.

[174] TĀ 3/170cd-173 (170–173ab) The reader is referred there to the notes for an analysis.

are assimilated to the rhythm of breathing. This is linked to the inner utterance which is the Vidyā of Parā, Trika's Supreme Goddess, that is, the syllable SAUḤ. S is Viṣatattva—the Principle of Poison and Pervasion. Ḥ is Kāmatattva—the Principle of Passion and AU is Nirañjana—the Stainless.[175]

Focused, as this practice is on the highest Trika Mantra—SAUḤ—we may conclude that the *Kulagahvara* was a Trika Tantra. Essentially the same yogic practice exercised in the course of the union of Kaula partners is taught in a Krama Tantra called the *Kālīkulakramapañcaśataka*, which Jayaratha refers to as the *Devīpañcaśataka*. The fundamental view of the Krama teachings, as we have already observed, is that the one reality is dynamic consciousness. Perpetually at rest within its Eternity, the Inexplicable, it appears within the immanence of Time as the arising and falling away at each moment of perceptions coupled with their contents. Accordingly, chapters 2, 3, 4, and 5 of the, as yet unpublished, *Kālīkulakrama* expound the phases of creation, persistence, withdrawal, and the Inexplicable, respectively. In the following passage drawn from there, the Centre is understood in Krama terms to be the abiding state of persistence (*sthiti*) between emanation and withdrawal, here called *avatāra*—'Descent' or 'Incarnation'. Jayaratha quotes it in his commentary on the *Tantrāloka* (TĀ 3/66cd-67ab) and the *Vāmakeśarīmata*, the root Tantra of the Śrīvidyā tradition.[176]

The yogi visualizes pure Śiva consciousness above the head in the form of the Full Moon, that drips vitalizing, blissful nectar into the body. This is emanation. It is offered as an oblation into the Fire of embodied divine consciousness that, stoked by it, blazes up to consume duality and generate a higher state of embodied consciousness, in a body of pure consciousness. This is the Fire of withdrawal. Thus, the Tantra teaches:

'Emanation (*sṛṣṭi*) is above, and it bestows supreme bliss. She is the supreme energy (*kalā*) of the (lunar) Drop (*baindav*) that rains down (divine) nectar (*pīyūṣa*). One should know that destruction, the Great Fire of Death that destroys (the universe), is below. Terrible (*ghora*), he is encircled by flames and, hard to bear, he is the repository of (all) the luminaries. Between them is the supreme radiant energy (*tejas*), beautiful with the bliss of both.

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[175] For an exposition of these three Principles the reader is referred to appendix B of chapter three of my translation of the *Tantrāloka* (vol. 2, 424–426).

[176] *Vāmakeśarīmata* 4/8cd-10ab.

(That energy) should be known to be the 'Descent' (*avatāra*) (which is the state of persistence). It is Śiva, who pervades (all things), and is (generated) by both (together) mutually penetrating one another, that is, Fire in the Moon and Moon in Fire (*agnicandrībha*). One should know the Moon to be creation (*sṛṣṭi*), while Fire is said to be destruction (*saṁhāra*). The Descent is said to be the Sun, the Supreme Lord, who is (persistence) located in the centre (between the two).'[177]

Jayaratha goes on to quote the following passage from some unknown source (perhaps the *Kulagahvara*?) in which these polarities are identified as the principles of Passion and Poison:

'One should contemplate the extensive brilliance (*tejas*) emitted from Kālagnirudra (the Fire of Time, rising up through the body from the tip of the right toe) as clear and intensely effulgent. O goddess, above (on the top of the head, visualize) the digit of the Moon, peaceful (*śāntā*) with the aesthetic savour (*rasa*) of the Bliss of the Nectar of the Full (Moon). Then by associating both with the Fire (of intense desire) and the Pervasion (*viṣa*) (of the tranquil state of consciousness following emission, visualize the) brilliance (*tejas*) (which is Fire) and the Moon that flows forth from that. Then, by the clearly evident mixture of the Fire (of the female seed) and the Moon (of the male seed), the Sun, which is Descent (*avatāra*), (dawns). Then from its presence (come forth) the (phases of) emergence and vanishing away (*prabhavāpyayau*); from this, the universe with all its diversity (comes into being). The learned man who has grasped the meaning (of the teaching) should meditate on that in the form of the Sun of Consciousness, which is right understanding (*yukti*).'

The *Devipañcaśataka* itself, in the following passage, says practically the same in this mystical, cryptic style, further underscoring the polarities of Fire and Pervasion, with the Descent of awakened consciousness in the Centre between them.

'The Fire of Time, a mass of (flames of) fire, is below. Above is the (lunar) Circle of Nectar. In the centre is the supreme (energy) in the form of the Sun (*arka*), that takes its support from the principle of the intellect. In this way, the mind (*manas*) and the ego, above and below, always abide as the Pervasion (*viṣa*) (of the tranquil state of consciousness following orgasm). It is said

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[177] *Devīpañcaśataka* 4/3–7ab.

that emanation is above and is like the Full Moon. Below the Upper Path is the greatly flaming (energy) in the form of Fire. O God, union takes place from the centre of (these) two states. O Lord of the gods, one should know that to be the Descent (*avatāra*) of the Sun, the supreme cause (of all things). (Emanation) becomes one by meditating on the union with the energized nectarine blood (*kalala*) (formed in the course of conception). Then the state of insight (*upalabdhibhāva*) one attains is the (dynamism of universal consciousness, which is) the sequence of the Kālikās (*kālikākrama*).'[178]

We have seen that Fire (*vahni*) and Pervasion (*viṣa*) represent two phases of the yogic practice involving sexual union. Fire, also called the Principle of Passion, is the initial phase, in which the energy of desire is stimulated to form a powerful intention to unite the polarities of consciousness, Śiva and Śakti, experienced externally as the partners engaged in union, and inwardly as the Moon of the mind above, and the Fire of subjectivity, permeated by the power of desire (*icchāśakti*), flaming up from below. Pervasion, also called the Principle of Poison, is the pervasive expanded state of consciousness experienced in the climax of union. The first is experienced as emanation, and the second as withdrawal into consciousness. The Fire of the former melts the Moon of the latter, which is experienced as a flow of nectar-like transformative bliss. The Sun of persistent, stable, illumined consciousness dawns by contemplating these two phases and fusing their radiant energies together in the centre between them. The Sun dawns as it descends into the perpetual present, as the self-replenishing cycle of the energies of cognitive consciousness embodied in the Kālikās who mark the phases in the cycle of perception at one with the dynamism of consciousness. Inwardly, they generate the illumined intellect of the Transmental (*unmanī*); externally, it may be embodied as an enlightened being born of this union. This means that this is not just a cognitive event. It is also physically creative and transformative.

The two, Fire as *Kāmatattva*—the principle of Passion and the Moon as *Viṣatattva*—the Principle of Poison (*viṣa*), or Pervasion (*viṣa*), are the initial and final moments of orgasm, in which the sexual fluids of the partners are emitted and absorbed. Internally, they are the two breaths, exhaled (*prāṇa*) and inhaled (*apāna*), respectively. The partners attend to the flow of exhalation and inhalation of each other's breathing and develop awareness of the

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[178] *Devipañcaśataka* 7/36–40ab

centre between them, flooded by the nectar of bliss that flows from the Moon of inhalation melted above by the heat of the Fire of exhalation below.

(When making love) one should place one's mind made of bliss in the middle (between the) 'Fire' (of the arousal of passion at the beginning) and the 'Poison' (of the pervasive consciousness of its appeasement at the end).

This is a way to penetrate the Heart of Bhairava consciousness. Abhinava elaborates how this is done in the following passage in the *Parātrīśikā*. Here, he is expounding the nature and experience of *visarga* which means 'emission', both at the physical level as orgasm, and as the flux of emanation that issues forth from the dynamism of consciousness. Ritual and meditation connect the two domains. The process begins with the contemplation of the female organ (*yoni*) as the sacred triangle of the Heart that enshrines the Trika triad of goddesses. Abhinava writes:

'Thus, (all) the three (goddesses) should be worshipped in the corners (of the Triangle of the Heart). In the centre is the Goddess (Parā) who is the churning (*nirmathana*) of the Bhairava of supreme bliss by the bliss of the emission that arouses (them) as the flow of the juice (*rasa*) of (the aesthetic delight of) eternal bliss. This is the tradition concerning the deities (of Trika and Krama that mark the phases of perception). (The same applies) also when Kaula adepts (*vīra*) engage in (sexual) union (*yāmalayoga*) (in which they worship the Goddesses) with (the emission) that is generated from (their) union with the (Kaula) consort (*dūti*), which is the arousal of the eternal bliss (gathered together) in the (genital) organ of bliss. (It also applies to the rites) in which the Hero is alone (*ekavīratā*) (when the Goddess is worshipped) by the union of (his) repose (*viśrāntiyoga*) in the innate bliss (of consciousness). (The same applies) even (in the case of an ordinary) man. The triangle, which is located below the bulb (*kanda*) (at the base of the spine), is the abode of the outpouring of the organ of bliss. By placing (his) mind (there), it generates the (semen) produced by the arousal of bliss when the rubbing (*saṁghaṭṭa*) from the root of that organ up to its extremity has become intense (*ghana*) p. 223). It is said here (with regard to this):

'One should cast the mind made of bliss in the middle between the Fire (of Passion at the beginning of union) and the Poison (of the pervasion of consciousness at its climax).' VBh 68a

In this way, the worship of the Heart is the Yoga of Bliss (*ānandayoga*). As is said in the *Trikatantrasāra*:

'Worship is the outpouring of bliss and should be considered (to be taking place) within the Triangle. It satisfies one's own heart by (the offering) perfumes, flowers, incense and the like.'

Everything is threaded through by the two seals (*mudrā*) (male and female), as they are essentially knowledge and action (respectively). The only (difference is that) the seal of knowledge within the deities is predominantly internal and that of action, external, whereas it is the other way around in the case of Kaula adepts (*vīra*). Penetration (into knowledge, the female partner) can take place in both the forward or the reverse way. It is with this in mind that it has been said that the power of action is placed within the Liṅga which is the power of knowledge.' PTv p. 222–223.

In this way, within the fourteen (digits of the Moon) is the fifteenth, which is united to, and adheres well (*saṁśliṣṭa*) to, emission (*visarga*) that culminates with Tithīśa and is the sixteenth (p. 224). Or else the pair is conjoined with the fourteenth, the Lord who is the emission of the sixteen lunar days and the fifteen. At the end of it, (where it culminates), is (located) the seventeenth (digit called) Anuttarakalā. The Heart is endowed with that. It has been explained extensively that all things (whether outer objects like a) jar (or inner ones) like (the experience of) pleasure, penetrate into that seminal Being (*bījasattā*) in (their) ultimately real form. Thus, that Heart is in this way the sixteen-fold Heart in accord there with (its nature as) Anuttara. It is the oneness (*sāmarasya*) of the Brahman which is the coming together (*samāhara*) of the four states of the object of perception and the perceiver, namely, exertion (*udyoga*) and the rest undivided (from one another) as the (condition) of the first (initial state of consciousness). United with that, these are the lords of the lunar days, ending with the letter AḤ[179] (who are such) by virtue of its power.

There are four Letters of Nectar (*amṛtavarṇa*) amongst those Lords of the lunar days. Third in terms of the (Trika triad of) Nara (Śakti and Śiva) is the Supreme Śiva nature which is rightly (*samyak*) endowed with them. The per-

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[179] I tentatively emend *ūkārāntāḥ* to *aḥkārāntāḥ*. I see no reason to maintain the printed reading.

ceiver pouring forth as the four and ten (lunar digits) is the object of knowledge. Just those digits of Nectar are made one with them in his own nature by (the perceiver) who desires intensely to satisfy (his consciousness). (Thus) attainable by the contemplation (*samāpatti*) of the arousal of (the duality of) subject and object (p. 225) or by the practice of meditation, the characteristic of which is oneness, he should enter (in this way) the heart of the universe as Bhairava.'

45) The bliss of climax and penetration into Śakti

शक्तिसंगमसंक्षुब्धशक्त्यावेशावसानिकम् ।
यत्सुखं ब्रह्मतत्त्वस्य तत्सुखं स्वाक्यमुच्यते ॥ ६९ ॥

śaktisaṃgamasaṃkṣubdhaśaktyāveśāvasānikam |
yat sukhaṃ brahmatattvasya tat sukhaṃ svākyam ucyate || 69 ||

The bliss (*sukha*) that culminates (during orgasm) with penetration into (Rudra's) power (*śakti*) well aroused by (sexual) union with a Śakti[180] is that of the reality of the Brahman which is said to be one's own (inherent) bliss. (69) (68)

Word-for-word meaning: *yat sukhaṃ* the bliss *śaktyāveśāvasānikam* that culminates (during orgasm) with penetration into power (*śakti*) *śakti-saṃgamasaṃkṣubdha* well aroused by (sexual) union with a Śakti *brahmatat-tvasya* is that of the reality of the Brahman *tat sukhaṃ* that bliss *ucyate* is said to be *svākyam* one's own (inherent bliss).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

It is said that having meditated on the bliss one experiences by (sexual) union with a woman (and so too) when that same woman is absent, (he) becomes bliss (itself).[181] Moreover, it is said that:

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[180] Jayaratha referring to this meditation explains that this means 'when he is enjoying sex with an external Tantric partner (*śakti*)'. TĀv ad 5/71cd-72ab

[181] The common belief is that the pleasure a man experiences having sex with a woman comes from the woman. Here the yogi is instructed to be aware that the joy he feels is actually that of his own inherent conscious nature. To convince him that that is so, the commentators point out that it is possible to experience the

'Embraced by (his) wife, he knows neither what is outside nor inside. The Veda says that this is an example. (Only) a fool considers it to be an injunction!'

'Emanation does not come from the penis, nor the vagina, not even from the vital seed. It is power that has been stimulated by bliss that emanates itself by itself.'[182]

In accord with this stated approach (*rīti*), the bliss (experienced) at the culmination of the penetration into the power of bliss, that has been generated by the bliss of (sexual) union with a woman, once abandoned the perception of (himself as a) man and (his partner as a) woman.[183]

(But although both partners experience this joy) it is established solely within oneself alone. That is '**one's own (inherent bliss)**'. One should reflect (*bhāvayet*) that it has not come about in any other (way). The union with a woman is said to be just the cause of (its) manifestation (the bliss is not physical). This and more has been said elsewhere so enough of (this) excessively extensive (talk).

Śivopādhyāya

'**(Sexual) union with a Śakti**' is (sexual) union with a woman. '**Well aroused**' by that (means) well impelled (by that). It '**culminates**', that is, attains completion by '**penetration into power**', that is, complete penetrative contemplative absorption into the power of bliss.

'Emanation does not come from the penis, nor the vagina, not even from the vital seed. It is power that has been stimulated by bliss that emanates itself by itself.'

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same pleasure even in her absence by recollecting the experience when she was present. The commentators emphasise that it is that particular woman the man recollects. The pleasure he feels alone is not generic.

[182] Editor's note: In a note by Mark Dyczkowski, this passage is attributed to the BṛUp. However, I have not been able to locate any passage in the BṛUp that corresponds verbatim to this formulation. The material in BṛUp 6.4 comes closest in doctrinal intent.

[183] Read *tyaktastrīpuruṣādiparyālocanaṃ* for *strīpuruṣādiparyālocanaṃ* as Śivopādhyāya takes it to be.

In accord with the stated method, at the end of the penetration into the power of bliss that has been generated by the bliss of (sexual) union with Śakti, the '**bliss**', which is (like) the resonance of a (struck) bell, '**of the reality of the Brahman**' is the bliss of the Supreme Brahman. Once abandoned the dualistic perception of (himself as a) man and (his partner as a) woman, that bliss, which is firmly established in one's own Self alone, is '**one's own**', that is, associated with the Self itself. One should contemplate that it has not come from something else. (Sexual) union with a woman is just the (incidental) cause of the manifestation (of that bliss) for that bliss is (inherently) just one's own. Thus, having meditated on the bliss one experiences by (sexual) union with a woman as being that (special) woman (and no other), (he) becomes bliss (and so experiences that bliss even in her absence). This is the overall sense.[184] Moreover, it is said:

'Embraced by (his) wife he knows neither what is outside or inside'. The Veda says that this is an example. (Only) a fool considers it to be an injunction!

There are some (who explain that this line means that) penetration (takes place into) the power of consciousness that is aroused by union with the power (*śakti*) (of consciousness) that is the (universal) effulgence of all things (it is not made manifest by an external partner).

Discussion

According to Swamijī, verses 69 and 70 are not teaching a meditative sexual practice or, as he would say, they are 'not a process'. They are simply metaphors or analogies to explain that spiritual joy is as intense and pleasing as sex. However, he is not supported in this view by the commentators or references in the texts, all of which agree that they are meditations. In the *Parātrīśikāvivaraṇa*, Abhinavagupta himself quotes verses 69 and 70 in such a way that it is clear that he did consider them to be such.

After quoting verse 70, Abhinava says that the sense is that 'by 'filling', that is, by the tactile sensation recollected in that domain of touch, reflected in the central channel of energy, which is supreme and uncreated, even in the absence of that primary (original outer) touch of the consort (who embodies

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184 *Śivopādhyāya* is quoting Ānandabhaṭṭa here.

the energy of consciousness), it arouses the vitality (*vīrya*), which is the inner touch of the energy (of consciousness)."[185] Then he goes on to quote verse 69, which refers to union with an external Śakti, introducing it simply with the words that that is the same (*tathā*).

These practices are central to the Trika teaching and understanding of what it is. Abhinava suggests this by citing just a short statement that the Deity 'taught the Kaulika (teachings) out of love'. He sustains that this view is in accord with mainline teachings. To do so, he quotes 'the Lord and great hero Vyāsa as also (saying): 'my Yoni is the Great Brahman, it is within that, that I place the (fecundated) womb. O Bhārata, all living beings are born from that.' He concludes his commentary saying, 'now enough with this excessive presentation of the secret teachings of the Trika scriptures."[186] Clearly, these meditations are an integral part, central to the 'secret Trika teachings'. They are not just metaphors.

In another place in the *Parātrīśikāvivaraṇa*, after explaining that Trika is the Triangle of the Yoni, Abhinava goes on to stress that the moment of fecundation is particularly sacred. 'The union of Śiva and Śakti which is the state of a single dense compact union of this kind of (male) seed and (female) flower is itself (inherently sacred) and should be worshipped as one's own Self. This is taught in the venerable *Trikatantrasāra* where we read:

'(This takes place by) the union (and the contemplation) (*samāpatti*) of (the male partner who is) Śiva and (the female one who is) Śakti. It is the dense compact (union) of Śiva and Śakti. One should worship the supreme Trika which is the union (and contemplation) of Śiva and Śakti."[187]

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[185] *iti | bharāt smaryamāṇo hi saṁsparśaḥ tatsparśakṣetre ca madhyamākrimaparāt makaśaktinālikāpratibimbitaḥ tanmukhyaśāktasparśābhāve pi tadantarvṛttiśākta sparśātmakavīryakṣobhakārī bhavati ity abhiprāyeṇa | tathā*

[186] *********snehāt kaulikam ādiśet | iti ca* | PTv p. 51
mahāvīreṇa bhagavatā vyāsenāpi–
mama yonir mahadbrahma tasmin garbhaṁ dadhāmy aham |
saṁbhavaḥ sarvabhūtānāṁ tato bhavati bhārata ||
... tad alam amunā trikaśāstrarahasyopadeśakathātiprastāvena | PTv p. 52.

[187] *tathāvidhabījakusumaikaghanabhāvaśivaśaktisaṁghaṭṭaḥ svayaṁ svātmanaiva pūjya ity upadiṣṭam śrītrikatantrasāre*
śivaśaktisamāpattyā śivaśaktighanātmakaḥ |
sivaśaktisamāpattitrikaṁ saṁpūjayet param || PTv p. 184

Jayaratha refers to this practice as one of the ways Abhinava lists that a man of 'refined insight', that is, one who does not identify with the body, enters the Heart of consciousness, which is 'the plane of emission'.[188]

'The man of fine insight (*sudhī*)' is one who has complete (and perfect) knowledge, and is in his last life. 'He should enter the Heart', that is, he should enter the plane of emission, on the following occasions.

1) 'When (his) power (which is his Tantric partner) is aroused (during intercourse)' that is, when he is enjoying sex with an external Tantric partner (*śakti*). As is said (in the *Vijñānabhairava*):

'The bliss (*sukha*) that culminates (during orgasm) with penetration into power (*śakti*), well aroused by (sexual) union with a *śakti*, is that of the reality of the Brahman, which is said to be one's own (inherent) bliss.'[189]

46) Experience of bliss even in the absence of Śakti

लेहनामन्थनाकोटैः स्त्रीसुखस्य भरात्स्मृतेः ।
शक्त्यभावेऽपि देवेशि भवेदानन्दसंप्लवः ॥ ७० ॥

lehanāmanthanākoṭaiḥ strīsukhasya bharāt smṛteḥ |
śaktyabhāve'pi deveśi bhaved ānandasaṃplavaḥ || 70 ||

O goddess of the gods, even in the absence of a Śakti, there is a flood of bliss by filling the memory with the joy (of sex, with a) woman, (had) by licking, churning, squeezing and the like. (70) (69)

Word-for-word meaning: *deveśi* O goddess of the gods *śaktyabhāve'pi* even in the absence of a *śakti* (woman) *bhaved* there is *ānandasaṃplavaḥ* a flood of bliss *bharāt* by filling *smṛteḥ* the memory *strīsukhasya* with the joy (of sex, with a) woman, *lehanāmanthanākoṭaiḥ* (had) by licking, churning, squeezing and the like

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By just attending to what one has experienced before of the joys a woman (gives a man) by the special things (they do together) like kissing all over,

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[188] TÀv ad 5/71cd-72ab.

[189] VBh 69 (68).

embracing, biting and scratching, (the same can be experienced) now as well even in the absence of a woman by just reflecting on the beauty of (her) hands and the like. The joy that (one experiences in that way), directly, is the dawning of the bliss that forgets all objects of sense. This being so, the recollection that comes from what one has experienced is well known to be a direct (immediately present) experience (*pratyakṣa*). This is what the teacher teaches.

Śivopādhyāya

'**Licking**' is tasting the wine of (a woman's) mouth, that is, kissing (it) all around. '**Churning**' is whirling around the (genitals which are) the main limb (of the body), or else (it means 'embracing'. '**Squeezing**' (means) rubbing repeatedly or else scratching with the nails etc. '**In the absence of Śakti**' (means) in the absence of the causes (of bliss), namely, a woman who is manifestly (present) and the like. By (saying) '**even in the absence of a Śakti**' (the idea is that) the bliss which is (essentially) one's own alone has come (about) by being intent on that (sexual pleasure had with a woman). The cause there is certainly not a woman (it comes from within one's self). Thus, one should meditate on one's own Self alone as possessing the (spiritual) bliss (of the Brahman). This is the meaning.

Bliss (is experienced) by filling the memory with the joy (of sex with a) woman (brought about) by licking etc. According to the venerable Abhinavagupta '**by filling**' (is meant) the touch which is to be recollected within the domain of that touch (i.e., the genitals) (where) the channel of the uncreated supreme power (*parāśakti*) in the middle is reflected. Even in the absence of the touch of (an outer) Śakti propense (to sexual intercourse, it) arouses the vital seed (*vīrya*) which is the touch of a Śakti as the activity (*vṛtti*) within that (domain of touch, that is, the genitals).

Discussion

Abhinava writes that:

'There are certain centres in the body that are, by their very nature, loci of bliss; examples are the genitals, the heart, and the palate etc. The tactile sensation of erotic pleasure, which one does not experience at first hand directly, but is inferred, thought, imagined etc., is reflected within them, so as to bring

about an emission of the vital seed."[190] Elsewhere in the same perspective, Abhinava explains that:

The sense is that by 'filling', that is, by the tactile sensation recollected in that field of touch, reflected in the central channel of energy which is supreme and uncreated, even in the absence of that primary (original outer) touch of the consort (who embodies the energy of consciousness), it arouses the vitality (*vīrya*) which is the inner touch of the energy (of consciousness).'

"By filling' is meant essentially that the recollection of (erotic) touch in the (genitals which is) the domain of that touch, reflected (in the subtle) channel of Śakti which, in the centre, is uncreated and supreme, even when the touch of Śakti, that is its main (and original form), is absent, it arouses the vitality which is the inner modality of that (within consciousness) of the touch of Śakti. ('Indeed, this touch (*sparśa*) recollected intensely and reflected within the central channel, which is the uncreated supreme power (experienced within the genital centre), brings about, even without that primary woman's touch (*śāktasparśa*), an arousal of vitality which consists of this inner tactile sensation of a woman.')"[191] Abhinava now quotes this verse saying that it does so in this way.

Clearly, Abhinava understands the process of 'filling the memory' as a meditative practice, rather than just recollection. Thus, after he has outlined the cognitive, metaphysical and theological dimensions of the power of emission, he proceeds in his usual allusive manner to indicate how it functions in its microcosmic counterpart at the individual embodied level of consciousness. Thus, he writes:

'Once one has attained entry here into the plane of full (and perfect) emission, one (truly) practices the teaching which says that by 'kissing (*lehanā*), churning (*manthana*) and the like (one attains the supreme state)'. (VBh 70 (69)) In this way, having laid hold of (*Suṣumṇā*), the (common) Channel in the Centre (between the partners identified with Śiva and Śakti), the supreme radiant energy (*tejas*) (of consciousness) vitalizes the entire body (of both). Then (when the female consort's) sexual energy (*ṛtu*) has been aroused from the start, one should proceed to the state (induced by orgasm), which is ejaculation (*visṛṣṭi*), the (spiritual) wonder of bliss. That

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[190] *ĪPVv* 1, p. 159.

[191] *PTv* p. 51.

(wonder experienced) alone is incomplete, but (when it is) complete, it is God (himself). Thus, the one energy of emission (*vaisargikī śakti*) itself unfolds (in this way)."[192]

Jayaratha quotes verse 70 as a conclusion to his commentary on one of the ways to penetrate into the Heart, where Abhinava says[193] 'when (the yogi) penetrates Kula (the power of emission, in the absence of a partner) (*kulāveśa*).' 'Even though there is no outer partner (*śakti*), 'penetration' (takes place as) the state of oneness (*tanmayībhāva*) (with the object) brought about by intense imagination (*bhāvanā*), preceded by the recollection of 'Kula,' that is, the nature of the empowered form (of the Tantric partner). That is said (in the *Vijñānabhairava*).'

47) Meditation on joy and bliss

आनन्दे महति प्राप्ते दृष्टे वा बान्धवे चिरात् ।
आनन्दमुद्गतं ध्यात्वा तल्लयस्तन्मना भवेत् ॥ ७१ ॥

ānande mahati prāpte dṛṣṭe vā bāndhave cirāt
ānandam udgataṃ dhyātvā tal layas tanmayo bhavet || 71 ||

When there is occasion for great bliss (such as when making love), or when seeing a (dear) relative (or friend) after a long time, having meditated on the bliss that arises (just then); (he, whose mind) is of that nature, dissolves into it. (71) (70)

Word-for-word meaning: *prāpte* when there is an occasion *mahati* for great *ānande* bliss *dṛṣṭe vā* or when seeing *bāndhave* a (dear) relative (or friend) *cirāt* after a long time *dhyātvā* having meditated *ānandam* on the bliss *udgataṃ* that arises (just then) *tanmayo bhavet* (he, whose mind) is of that nature, *tallayas* dissolves into it.

Swamijī agrees that the first example is about sex. In both examples, you 'find out wherefrom the joy has appeared. Situate your mind there with full awareness, then you will attain the *nirvikalpa* state of *samādhi*.'

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[192] MVV 1/896–899ab.
[193] TĀv ad 5/71cd-72ab.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

In the very same way, when (the yogi) sees a '**(dear) relative**' or a good friend and the like or the beloved after a long time, laying hold of the joy that has just arisen (within himself), he rests in the emergence of Supreme (spiritual) Bliss by virtue of (his) inner state of mind brought about by contemplating it. This is the meaning. And the same is said by such (verses) in the Spanda (teachings):

'Spanda is stable in the state one enters when extremely angry, intensely excited, running or wondering what to do.'[194]

Śivopādhyāya

The meaning is that when a Śakti, that is, a clearly visible woman and like, is present, one attains great bliss. (Another meaning is) that any one who is tormented by poverty, for example, that has found a (vast) endless treasure that is free of troubles, (experiences) great bliss when it is found. (The yogi) should meditate on the joy that arises when, after he has been away for a long time, he returns and meets his favorite son or friend. Having laid hold of it when it has just arisen, he rests in the joy which is that of the introverted mind (engaged in) that meditation. This is the meaning.

48) The pleasure of good food and drink

जग्धिपानकृतोल्लासरसानन्दविजृम्भणात् ।
भावयेद्भरितावस्थां महानन्दस्ततो भवेत् ॥ ७२ ॥

jagdhipānakṛtollāsarasānandavijṛmbhaṇāt |
bhāvayed bharitāvasthāṃ mahānandas tato bhavet || 72 ||

(The yogi) should contemplate (*bhāvayed*) the state (of spiritual) plenitude (he experiences, brought about) by the exuberance of the joy, which is the savor (of the aesthetic delight) of the outpouring (of consciousness) brought about by eating and drinking. From that, there is great bliss. (72) (71)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhāvayed* (the yogi) should contemplate *bharitāvasthāṃ* the state (of spiritual) plenitude (he experiences, brought

[194] SpKā 22.

about) *jagdhipānakṛtollāsa-rasānandavijṛmbhaṇāt* by the exuberance of the joy, which is the savor (of the aesthetic delight) of the outpouring (of consciousness) brought about by eating and drinking. *mahānandas tato bhavet* from that, there is great bliss.

Swamijī: when you are full of that blissful taste while eating or while drinking, you merge yourself in that blissful state.... don't think of yourself as an individual being consider yourself, or imagine that you are, all-full, all-around full ... you must imagine that you are situated in the supreme and full state of Lord Śiva—*mahānanda*

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The intended sense is that the aesthetic pleasure (*rasa*) that arises by eating sweet meats, drinking milk and the like is, (in reality, spiritual) bliss (*ānanda*). By contemplating it in the state of the plenitude of (spiritual) bliss brought about by that experience, one, whose mind is concentrated, attains supreme bliss. (Thus, the meaning) has been established.[195]

Śivopādhyāya

'**Eating**' is the eating of just some food that remedies excessive hunger. '**Drinking**' is the taste of cool water that removes excessive thirst or that of sweet milk and the like. '**The exuberance of the joys brought about**' by these two that are the causes of three effects, namely, satisfaction, nourishment and the quelling of hunger with each mouthful (of food), each sprinkling and each drop (of water). '**Exuberance**' is the elevated flashing forth (of joyful consciousness) brought about by reflecting on the touch and the rest of one's own limbs, that is, the hands and feet etc. 'Aesthetic savour (**rasa**)' is the moisture of the love (of good food and drink) when none of the gross and subtle vital channels are arid (with hunger and thirst). Without food and the like, the channels (of the vital breath) become rough (and dry), (but) when that is available, the spreading out of the flavor (*rasa*) and after that the bliss, or else

[195] What the unmindful enjoys as the pleasure of good food is for the yogi who concentrates on the divine, the way to experience the bliss inherent in ultimate reality.

(one can understand that to be) the consciousness of the reflective awareness of 'I' is the *rasa* or bliss (unfolds). The Veda (declares):

'He is indeed *rasa*, once one has obtained that *rasa*, he is blissful.'

By its '**exuberance**', that is, by its expanding out in all the areas of the body, contemplating the state of plenitude of one's own body that (arises) for that reason, one attains Great Bliss. This is the meaning. (There are) those who say that the state of plenitude is due to the expansion of bliss brought about by savoring, eating and drinking tasty 'heroes' substances' (like meat and wine). (Worldly) gourmets (*sahṛdaya*) are the authority concerning reflection (of the experience) on the plane of one's own inherent bliss (that manifests) when swallowing (an alcoholic beverage) that makes one very drunk. One should ask them. What thought (can there be) of the true nature of things (*tattvacintanā*) in that kind of state? If, on the contrary (to people generally), there (in such cases) also (some people's) minds are attentive (to higher realities), then they are very fortunate. The object of veneration of all, they should be saluted by everybody as great teachers. They should not be criticized, rather, one should bow to them. For it is said:

'One should not criticize the men who are dedicated to substances meant for Kaula adepts (*vīradravya*), rather one should praise them.'

49) Identification with the savor of music and art

गीतादिविषयास्वादासमसौख्यैकतात्मनः ।
योगिनस्तन्मयत्वेन मनोरूढेस्तदात्मता ॥ ७३ ॥

gītādiviṣayāsvādāsamasaukhyaikatātmanaḥ |
yoginas tanmayatvena manorūḍhes tadātmatā || 73 ||

The yogi who (experiences) the oneness of the unparalleled joy of savoring singing and other such (beautiful) objects (of sense, his) mind fixed (and well concentrated on that), becomes of that same (blissful) nature (as the Brahman) by identifying with it (*tanmayatvena*).[196] (73) (72)

Word-for-word meaning: *yoginas* the yogi *gītādiviṣayāsvādāsamasaukhyaikatātmanaḥ* who (experiences) the oneness of the unparalleled joy

[196] *This verse is* quoted in TĀv ad 3/209cd-210 and also in TĀv ad 3/229 and 3/239cd-240ab.

of savoring singing and other such (beautiful) objects (of sense) *manorūḍhes* (his) mind fixed (and well concentrated on that) *tadātmatā* becomes of that same (blissful) nature (as the Brahman) *tanmayatvena* by identifying with it.'

Swami Lakshmanjoo explains (Bäumer 2007: 96–97): 'the yogi whose mind is focused on the unparalleled ecstasy while experiencing these musical tunes, is united or has become one with that unparalleled bliss. The yogi experiences this when he becomes one with that sound of music and when his mind is absorbed in the one collective sound of music, not the different notes, [just the] *nāda* [aesthetically pleasing sound] that prevails in all the seven notes. When you concentrate on that collective sound there of that string instrument, concentrate on the beauty of sound.... An elevated yogi can enter in *samādhi* through the feeling of that sound which is not a sound in any sound. Abhinava says you can rise very high in that collective meaning suggested in poetry. Elevated souls can rise even by the ordinary talk of life.... Fully elevated souls can rise in ordinary talk also, even when hearing bad names from anybody.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By the relish and the rest (that one experiences) by savoring the sweet and subtle sounds of (a musical instrument) such as a flute or a vīṇā or that of vocal music, supreme bliss arises. It is said that the regular (rhythm) of the (onomatopoeic) sounds (uttered) in the course of keeping time (*tālakriyā*) is itself the arising of supreme bliss because at that time one forgets (all) auspicious and inauspicious thoughts. Let that suffice.

By forgetting this heap of objectivity in this way, whilst just the being (itself) of the perceiver persists and is engaged (in being such) from the beginningless past, objectivity is quelled and Great Bliss arises. This is certain.

Śivopādhyāya

'**Singing**' (is emblematic of the entire range of music beginning with) vocal, that is, utterance (*uccāraṇa*) formed with the notes of the three registers (*grāma*), namely, the upper, middle and lower, up to the production of (musical) sound (*śabdana*) by a percussionist on a percussion instrument (*hālāka*).[197]

[197] I could not find the word '*hālāka*' in any dictionary. Its meaning is uncertain.

The words '**other such**' refer to the perception of touch, form, and taste etc. Thus, the savoring of the objects of sense, such as sound, by means of the function of the sense of hearing, is included (implicitly) in the word 'singing' is the sense of the wonder that that brings about. In the same way, there is the wonder (aroused) by seeing something that possesses a very beautiful form. Such too is the savor of the relish of a sweet juice and the like. The '**unparalleled**' that is, incomparable '**joy**' that can (only be) understood by one's own (personal) experience (produces) the '**oneness**' of the Yogi who is of that nature. (His) '**mind is fixed**' (and for) that reason of that same (blissful) nature. His identification with it is a state of entry (*āveśa*) (into a higher level of consciousness brought about by) contact with Śakti (*śāktasparśa*). It is for that reason that '**(he becomes) of that same (blissful) nature**', that is, (he) attains the nature of the Supreme Brahman. This too is *Śāmbhavopāya*.

50) Concentrating on whatever satisfies the mind

यत्र यत्र मनस्तुष्टिर्मनस्तत्रैव धारयेत् ।
तत्र तत्र परानन्दस्वरूपं संप्रवर्तते ॥ ७४ ॥

yatra yatra manastuṣṭir manas tatraiva dhārayet |
tatra tatra parānandasvarūpaṃ saṃpravartate || 74 ||

The mind should be sustained (*dhārayet*) wherever the mind is satisfied.[198] It is there that the inherent nature of Supreme Bliss arises. (74) (73)

Word-for-word meaning: *manas* the mind *dhārayet* should be sustained *yatra yatra tatraiva* wherever, *manastuṣṭir* the mind is satisfied *tatra tatra* it is there that *parānandasvarūpaṃ* the inherent nature of Supreme Bliss *saṃpravartate* arises.

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[198] The expression 'whatever delights the mind' (*yat kiñcin mānasāhlādi*), is a standard one. A verse that makes a similar point, quoted from an unidentified source in TĀv intro. to 29/21ab, also begins this way. So also does the following one, quoted by Kṣemarāja in SvTu ad 2/131–135 to explain the 'secret' inner equivalent of the food offered to the deity and then consumed in the course of worship (*naivedya*). 'All of whatever delights the mind, having first contemplated it with the method (*yukti*) that corresponds to it, is one with Bhairava, because it is one with all things and so merges it all in that, its own (and one's own) abode (which is consciousness).'

Swami Lakshmanjoo explains: 'Whatever is displayed joyfully in your brains should be offered to God. For example, you feel joy from embracing a beautiful girl [or man], that is the worship of Śiva. You must not embrace her [or him] for your own joy. Offer that joy to Śiva in the Heart [of your consciousness, that is, in] *brahmasaddhāmni* [Brahman's Abode of Pure Being] which is *sākṣātkāra* [direct realization of the Absolute]. Offer the joy of sex to Śiva, don't taste that joy yourself. It is for Śiva. Worshipping is really this differentiated perception of the world of objectivity, united with pure, independent Bhairava consciousness.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The overall sense here is as follows. Wherever the mind delights in the qualities of the five senses and the like, be that auspicious or inauspicious, (the yogi) becomes supreme bliss resting there itself in what is auspicious or inauspicious. This is the certain conclusion (of this teaching). Where the mind applies itself, be it to what is auspicious or inauspicious, bliss arises there itself by forgetting the awareness of (everything) else. This is the certain conclusion (of the teaching).

Śivopādhyāya

The mind's satisfaction is the delight of the mind. The disturbance of the mind will certainly not be taught (to be desirable). In whatever beautiful thing, such as the face of a young woman or a lotus, the mind is fixed, it should be maintained there itself and the mind should be made firm (there). But (this should not be done) without (first) having disciplined it so that, due to the many kinds of disturbance brought about by thought, it may not cast one's own Self down from the state in which it is mounted on Yoga.

The mind is also sustained in this way, having (first) quelled the disturbance of lust and the rest (of such distractions). Here (the practice is that the yogi should think) as much as he is able to do so is that "I am Śiva, whose nature is consciousness, I am here in the temple of the beautiful body of a young woman. This beautiful woman (*bhaṅgiḥ*) is mine alone." (He should) not (do this helplessly) only under the control of lust. Squeezing the breasts with the cupped hands, (playfully) pulling (the woman's) delicate and soft, locks of hair, making inviting looks with the eyes and tongue, shaking the arms, awakening

sounds of pleasure when making love, after having ingratiated (her), making haste to courteously show respect (towards her as she) holds (invitingly) the braid of hair she made herself; rocking the neck constantly, gazing steadfastly, (her legs) spread out and thrown upwards; making marks (on the body) with the nails of the fingers; tearing, moulding and kissing (her) two charming cheeks; uniting (with her) thighs; striking her two broad hips; (her) lower lip blue and red making at length the sound Ū (*ṣaṭhavarṇapluta-saṃbodhana*); Cupid's fire inflamed, sharpening (the couple's) power of procreation; casting (his) rod and uniting (with the woman) and finally sprinkling (her womb) with sperm—by this manner of arousal one throws oneself down into the deep pit (*garta*) (of hell). As is said here itself, further ahead:

'Having halted (the agitation of) the mind (*buddhi*) when (sexual) desire, anger, greed, delusion, madness, and envy (are about to arise), (what remains is that (one, supreme) reality (of consciousness that underlies it)).'[199]

The sense is that having (first) calmed the disturbance of lust and the rest within oneself and made the mind immobile and one-pointed, what remains is to contemplate that reality which is the universal pulsation (of consciousness) (*sāmānyaspanda*). Then the mind is satisfied and so (it is there) that the mind should be directed. Thus, this is well said. Otherwise, the words of Vāsudeva, the venerable teacher of (all) the world, would be contradicted. As (he says in the *Bhagavadgītā*)

'Triple is the gate of hell, destructive of the Self—lust, anger and greed; therefore, one should abandon these three. The man who is liberated from these three gates to darkness, O Kaunteya, practices what is good for him and thus goes to the supreme good.'[200]

Similarly, the Spanda teaching would (also) become meaningless (and useless, where it says):

'An individual who (though) desirous of doing various things, (but) incapable of doing them due to his innate impurity, (experiences) the supreme state (*paraṃ padam*) when the disruption (*kṣobha*) (of his false ego and attachment) ceases.'[201]

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[199] *VBh* 101 (100).

[200] *BhGī* 16/21–22.

[201] *SpKā* 9.

One who, although he has seen something very beautiful, is purified in accord with his own (spiritual) power, does not become attached and is not impure (*apavitra*). This meaning (of the teaching) has been arrived at with regard to one who aspires to liberation. For those who are liberated, this condition in which this kind of disturbance arises does not occur. They have a direct experience of constant contemplative absorption (*nityasamādhi*), which has been attained by the complete maturation of the six absorptions. The characteristics of the six absorptions will be described further ahead.[202] The seventh one is the direct experience of constant absorption. And (the nature of this) contemplative absorption will (also) be explained (further ahead). He will say further ahead with that intention:

'Wherever the mind goes, whether outside or within, Śiva's state is present there. (Śiva) pervades (everything), so where (else) could it go?'[203]

So too: 'Everything is made of Śiva and having moved, where will he go?'[204]

'When his body has been forgotten by contemplating the reflective awareness of consciousness, that great soul, disaffected, does not wish to be attached to worldly experience.'

As is taught (in the scriptures), identification with the body gives rise to attachment to worldly experience. In the case of the liberated (soul) that has ceased and so he has no desire for worldly experience. If he does sometimes, that is possible because he too is under the sway of (the consequences of his) residual (past) action that has begun (to bear its consequences). (But) that happens only (very) occasionally (to such a person) in this world, not at all generally everywhere (in every case). So, there is no defect (in our view).

Discussion

There are many terms that denote oneness in Sanskrit. Many of them are virtually synonyms. In some cases, however, a particular expression denotes a specific aspect, form, or state of oneness. This is the case with the expression '*tanmaya-*', which literally means '(being) made of that'. This expression is reserved for the oneness aesthetically sensitive people experience with the

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[202] See Śivopādhyāya's commentary to VBh 116.

[203] VBh 116.

[204] SvT 4/313cd. See the references for VBh 116 for a discussion.

aesthetic object. For example, we experience this kind of oneness when beautiful music transports us far away from our daily life with its cares and countless thoughts. We become the music. This oneness is essentially a state of intense undistracted absorption, without which it would not be possible to experience the beauty of anything. Indeed, yogis who can still their mind and maintain a steady state of concentration, experience every object they attend to as beautiful. Clearly, this is easier to do when the object is in itself beautiful and attractive. So, the Yogi is advised to fix his mind on anything that delights and satisfies it. Accordingly, the VBh (74) teaches: 'Fix the mind wherever it is satisfied. There Supreme Bliss manifests.'[205]

The subject of the meditations now shift to the contemplation of the states of consciousness, waking and dreaming, and how to reach supreme consciousness by means of them.

51) The Goddess Parā manifests between Waking and Sleep

अनागतायां निद्रायां प्रणष्टे बाह्यगोचरे ।
सावस्था मनसा गम्या परा देवी प्रकाशते ॥ ७५ ॥

anāgatāyāṃ nidrāyāṃ praṇaṣṭe bāhyagocare |
sāvasthā manasā gamyā parā devī prakāśate || 75 ||

The state that manifests, which should be grasped by the (attentive) mind when, (as one falls asleep), the external field (of awareness) has disappeared (but) sleep has not yet come, is the Goddess Parā.[206] (75) (74)

Word-for-word meaning: *sāvasthā* The state that *prakāśate* manifests, *gamyā* which should be grasped *manasā* by the (attentive) mind *bāhyagocare*

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[205] See TĀ 3/209cd-210 and TĀ 4/121cd-122ab.

[206] A very similar verse with partially the same wording is found in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* (2/106/7). It reads:

anāgatāyāṁ nidrāyāṁ manoviṣayasaṁkṣaye |
puṁsaḥ svasthasya yo bhāvaḥ sa cidākāśa ucyate ||

'The state of being (*bhāva*) of the individual soul established in itself when, (as he falls asleep), the objects of the mind have disappeared (but) sleep has not yet come, is said to be the Sky of Consciousness.'

It is hard to see without more evidence whether the *Vijñānabhairava* is drawing from the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* or the other way around.

when, (as one falls asleep and) the external field (of awareness) *praṇaṣṭe* has disappeared *nidrāyāṃ* (but) sleep *anāgatāyāṃ* has not yet come *parā devī* is the Goddess Parā.

Swamijī: Aware in sleep, in-between sleep, he knows where this wakefulness has ended and the dreaming state has started ... he does not go into the dreaming state.... He never sleeps ... It is that point which gives you rest; and that relaxation of going to sleep is because you are entering through that channel... at that moment he can't walk.... He does not see his body, he doesn't see his dreams, but he is aware of his Being.... This is *nimīlana samādhi* [introverted contemplative absorption]. Body doesn't sleep.... He does not see his body. This is real rest. The *turya* state (of Śiva consciousness) is the real rest. That centre is the real rest.... This is *Śāmbhavopāya*.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Sleep is said to be the supreme state when it is in an emergent state, (that is), when (just) waking up (in the state between sleeping and waking). It is the state that makes consciousness clear (and lucid). This is how things are. It has been described thus:

'Contemplating the state (*bhāva*) that arises when sleep begins and waking ends, one experiences imperishable bliss directly.'

Śivopādhyāya

'When sleep has not yet come', that is, when the activity of the mind is covered with darkness and the perception of the five fields (of the senses) been destroyed, the state which is unobscured in the centre **'should be grasped by the (attentive) mind'**, that is, it should be made one's own by checking (and laying hold) of one's own consciousness. When that is so, that same (state) manifests as the Supreme Goddess. She is also (called) Śāmbhavī. The same (is said) in Vāṣiṣṭha's philosophy:

'Contemplating the state (*bhāva*) that arises when sleep begins and waking ends, one experiences imperishable bliss directly.'[207]

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[207] A similar verse is found in the commentary on the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* ad 2/106/7. It reads:

52) Gazing into empty space illumined by the sun or a lamp

तेजसा सूर्यदीपादेराकाशे शवलीकृते ।
दृष्टिर्निवेश्या तत्रैव स्वात्मरूपं प्रकाशते ॥ ७६ ॥

tejasā sūryadīpāder ākāśe śavalīkṛte |
dṛṣṭir niveśyā tatraiva svātmarūpaṃ prakāśate || 76 ||

One should direct one's gaze into the sky (or an empty space) that is variously illumined, for example, by the light of the sun (during the day), or a lamp (that shines at night) and the like. There itself one's own essential nature manifests. (76)

Word-for-word meaning: *niveśyā* one should direct *dṛṣṭir* (one's) gaze *ākāśe* into the sky (or empty space) *śavalīkṛte* variegated *tejasā* by the light *sūryadīpāder* of the sun, lamp or the like *tatraiva* there itself *svātmarūpaṃ* one's own essential nature *prakāśate* manifests.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

One's own (true) nature becomes manifest by practicing to maintain a fixed gaze with an undisturbed mind in a state of oneness with the sky of consciousness of one's own essential nature. (This can be done by concentrating) in (any) particular place located above or below in relation to great light that has been made (pleasingly) various during the day by the light of the sun's rays and at night by the light of the moon. Or else (one may practice concentration) on a varied (and pleasing) (*citra*) space in a room located in some part of a house (that, in the evening, is) pervaded by the light of a lamp. The fruit (of this practice) is the knowledge of the fourteen worlds and the supreme mental state of recognition (of the true nature of) the host of stars, which arises in this way.

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nidrādau jāgarasyānte yo bhāva upajāyate |
taṁ bhāvaṁ dhārayan yogī na duḥkhair abhibhūyate ||

The yogi, maintaining the state (*bhāva*) that arises when sleep begins and waking ends is not overcome by painful things.

The first line of the verse here is identical. The second one reads:

taṁ bhāvaṁ bhāvayan sākṣād akṣayānandam aśnute ||

Śivopādhyāya

Fixing his gaze during the day on the outer great sky that is above and below, (shining) variously by the light of the sun, and at night the (same) great sky (that shines) variously by the light of the moon (both) within the lunar orb and outside it and, so too in the same way, the space in a room that is pervaded externally and within the sphere (of the light of) a lamp located somewhere in the house (appears) various by the light of its flame. (Having done so, he sees) the form of his own Self by means of the concentration in which (his) gaze is fixed without blinking. (In other words,) he sees with the vision of knowledge that his own essential nature is all the worlds in the form of dense (uninterrupted) consciousness. The Lord Patañjali has (said) the same (in the *Yogasūtra*, where we read): '(the yogi has) a knowledge of the worlds by concentrating on the sun' and '(he has) a knowledge of the multitude of stars (by concentrating) on the moon.'[208]

(If the sky or space) is not inlaid with (this) radiant energy, the support (of the sense of sight) is just the pure (clear) sky alone. (How the yogi should) fix (his) gaze will be discussed further ahead. (Essentially, it means) gazing without a break, once (the yogi has) seen the pure (clear) sky. Or else, (one may add that) the true nature of one's own Self shines when there is a state of oneness with the sky of the consciousness of one's own nature, also when (the yogi) concentrates on (a heavenly body) like the sun. That itself is the main fruit (of this practice) because it is that which is to be achieved most (*upadeyatama*) (of all). Knowledge of the worlds is a secondary fruit of (this) meditation (*dhāraṇā*). Let this suffice.

Discussion

The immediate sense of this verse is that the meditation taught here can be done outside during the day, when viewing the expanse of the sky illumined by the sun. It can also be done indoors at night, viewing the space in the room illumined by the light of a lamp. Swamijī, however, says that we must look at the light of the light bulb, then close the eyes and when opening them, observe that the room is full of that light. Similarly, with the light of the sun

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[208] *bhuvanajñānaṃ sūrye saṃyamāt* (3/25)
candre tārāvyūhajñānam (3/16)

and the sky. But without looking at the sun directly—'it is just imagination. Just look at it, have acquaintance with it, know it, remember it, and get lost in it.' Swamijī denies this is done with moonlight also because it is not mentioned in the verse, but Ānandabhaṭṭa includes it as a possibility. Swamijī says that this is *Śāktopāya* probably because it requires an initial use of the 'imagination'. Once that has been established, the yogi enters the Śāmbhava state free of thought.

53) The Five Seals of the Krama Teachings

करङ्किण्या क्रोधनया भैरव्या लेलिहानया ।
खेचर्या दृष्टिकाले च परावाप्तिः प्रकाशते ॥ ७७ ॥

karaṅkiṇyā krodhanayā bhairavyā lelihānayā |
khecaryā dṛṣṭikāle ca parā vyāptiḥ prakāśate || 77 ||

By (practicing) Karaṅkiṇī, Krodhanā, Bhairavī, Lelihānā and Khecarī (*mudrās*) when perception takes place, the pervasion of (the Goddess) Parā manifests. (77)

Word-for-word meaning: *karaṅkiṇyā krodhanayā bhairavyā lelihānayā* By (practicing) Karaṅkiṇī, Krodhanā, Bhairavī, Lelihānā and Khecarī (*mudrās*) *dṛṣṭikāle* when perception takes place *vyāptiḥ* the pervasion of *parā* (the Goddess) Parā *prakāśate* manifests.

Swamijī explains that 'the Jñāna Siddhas are 'those who have become elevated by knowledge of books' (they also have Gurus). Karaṅkiṇī *mudrā* [is] when the body lies flat on the ground like a motionless corpse. Mantra Siddhas become such by Mantra Yoga. Krodhanī—make your face furious without movement, wide-open eyes, wide-open mouth, wide-open teeth. These Siddhas lie down and rest in the oneness of awareness. They attain oneness with Lord Śiva by this *mudrā*. They experience Cit Kuṇḍalinī, Krama *mudrā* and everything, Jagadānanda, Ūrdhva Kuṇḍalinī in that position. They have to use that *mudrā* because by recitation of mantras, your body has become more attached to you, your soul. So you have to shatter it out by *krodha*, by wrath, by the posture of wrath (this is a yogic posture, not anger).

Melāpa Siddhas become saints by *melāpa* [union] with Yoginīs in a dream or *samādhi*. For example, a yoginī appeared to Maheśvarānanda in the state between waking and dreaming. Yoginī comes at night and embraces me, or

kisses me, or gives me some filthy thing to eat, ... because whatever they give is divine.... While eating, you will find nectar in it; but it will appear to you as filth. 'Bhairavī *mudrā* is to keep your eyes wide open without twinkling, and your mouth also wide open. (Bhairavī *mudrā* is actually a combination of Bhairavī and Cakita *mudrā*). Do not breathe in and out. It happens at the end of Yoginīmelāpa, when it is over, then you enter this *mudrā*. This is *anupāya*. Śākta Siddhas Lelihāna *mudrā*—tasting something sweet, moving the lips and tongue. Śāmbhava Siddhas–Khecarī Mudrā: those Siddhas in the Śāmbhava state enter this *mudrā* in the end.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The sense is that '**when perception takes place the pervasion of (the Goddess) Parā manifests**' by 1) (the power that) perceives the universe as if it were a corpse, that is, as just a motionless skeleton and 2) by (the power) engaged in wrath (*krodha*); 3) by the power of perception or 4) by (its) one-pointed (attention maintained) in order to consume (all things) or 5) by that (power that) has come forth from a great distance in order to view the sky.

Śivopādhyāya

'**When perception takes place,**'[209] the Goddess Parā shines. This is the state of identity with the undifferentiated (*niṣkala*) (aspect of) the Goddess who is variously called the venerable Vyomeśī, Vāmeśvarī and the like. (This happens) '**when perception takes place**' characterized by the gesture of 1) Karaṅkiṇī, which is (the power that) perceives the universe as if it were a corpse, that is, as just a motionless skeleton and 2) by Krodhanī (that is, the power) engaged in wrath (*krodha*), 3) by Bhairavī, that is, by the power of perception or 4) by Lelihānā that is by one-pointed (attention maintained) in order to consume (all things), 5) by Khecarī (which is the power that) has come forth to a great distance in order to view the sky.

1) Karaṅkiṇī causes the body made of the five gross elements to rest in the Supreme Void. It is the seal of the Jñāna Siddhas. 2) Krodhinī embraces, within

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[209] As often happens, Śivopādhyāya begins by presenting an expanded version of Ānandabhaṭṭa's commentary.

the body of Mantra, the group of twenty-four principles (*tattva*) (ranging from Earth to Nature). This is the seal of the Mantra Siddhas. 3) Bhairavī is the seal of the Melāpa Siddhas that withdraws everything into itself. 4) Lelihānā repeatedly savors everything as being in a state of (perfect) plenitude. This is the seal of the Śākta Siddhas. 5) Khecarī moves perpetually in the Voids of Śakti and the Pervasive One (*vyāpinī*) and the rest (of the higher energies of Sound). This is the seal of the Śāmbhava Siddhas. That is said (in the following verses):

'Karaṅkiṇī Krodhinī, Bhairavī, Lelihānikā and Khecarī—these seals abide together as a group of five (with the same nature). The activity (*karman*) (of these five), distributed amongst the Jñāna, Mantra, Melāpa, Śākta and Śāmbhava (Siddhas), respectively, is in all respects continuous with them.'

1) The 'skeleton' (*karaṅka*) is the body. (The seal is called) Karaṅkiṇī because (it is formed) by experiencing the body (in this way). 2) Krodhinī (the Angry One) (is formed) due to the arising of the foundation of one's own Self. 3) Bhairavī (is such) because it withdraws (into) its own essential nature. 4) Lelihānā (who Destroys by Licking Up) (is formed) for the destruction of the subtle body (*puryaṣṭaka*) made of the latent traces (of past action). 5) Khecarī (the Skyfarer is such) because it is established as the essential nature of the Sky of Awakened Consciousness, which is devoid of (all) obscuring coverings.

'This is the supreme seal. Having offered libation to all the universe, from the hell worlds up to Śiva, it abides (perpetually) by virtue of its own (supreme) condition.'

Niṣkriyānandanātha[210] reads (the name as) Karāṅkiṇī (explaining it) as follows:

'The rays (*kara*) have thirteen forms which are the modalities of the arousal of all the (thirteen) senses. The 'mark' (*aṅka*) is the extension of the body of

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[210] Niṣkriyānandanātha is the earliest known Krama author. We have recovered two works by him. One is the *Chummmāsaṅketaprakāśa* and the other is an extraordinary Krama hymn called *Pañcāśatślokī*—'Consisting of Fifty Verses'. There are earlier Krama works but these are of unknown authorship. Again, Niṣkriyānanda refers to his teacher—Siddhanātha—but there is no known work by him and he may well not have written anything.

consciousness which is Without Abode.[211] That is called 'Karāṅka'. Enveloped in its tranquility,[212] it is said to be Niṣkaraṅka (the Disembodied). (Self-sustained,) it is the supreme boon, devoid of (all phenomenal) support.'

Vāmeśvarī

This extension (of the body of consciousness) is as follows. That which, in its supreme form, is called 'a wave of energy' (*śaktilaharī*) and is (transcendent) Akula (arises out) from the ocean of the primordial Sky, which is Mahākaula (the union of Śiva and Śakti, transcendence and immanence). This same (energy) in its subtle form (arises out of) Akula in the form of the group of five Kulas (that is, as the groups of energies beginning with Vāmeśvarī) and condenses progressively. This being so, the venerable Vyomeśvarī, although undifferentiated (*niṣkalā*), sports with its differentiated (*sakala*) (embodied) nature within the triple universe up to Vṛndacakra (the assembly of all the energies and powerholders) and pulses radiantly always, at all times, as the first (of all the powers). Although she is expanding out (in this way), she remains just one. That same (power), by virtue of its (initial small and) subtle expansion, (arises out) from the ocean of the primordial Sky and having enveloped within itself the four, Khecarī and the rest, (all held together) like the juices of a peacock's egg, the venerable Vāmeśvarī comes forth as the Wave in the form of the very first pulsation (marking the beginning of the process of emission). This is its initial polarity (*koṭi*). The venerable Vāmeśī, the mistress of Vṛndacakra, opens up the Assembly of the Divine Current (of Teachers, that is, the Siddhas) (*divyaughacakra*) in accord with the principle that every (single) thing is of the nature of all things.

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[211] This generally unusual and uncommon expression is a common way of referring to ultimate reality in Krama sources. Phenomenal entities, be they physical or mental, all have a characteristic feature in common, namely, that they are in some particular location or phase of a process, like a moment in time or phase of perception. The dynamism of cognitive consciousness Krama worships as Kālī, the Goddess of Consciousness, has no location or 'abode' in this sense.

[212] Read *prasādanāvṛtam* for *prāsādanāvṛtam*. The text appears to be corrupt here. The meaning is uncertain. I take *prasādana* to mean 'tranquility'. It can also mean 'worship.'

The Siddhas: The Sequence of Phonemes in Vṛndacakra

There are five kinds (of Siddhas) in Vṛndacakra. These are, in due order, Śāmbhava, Śākta, Melāpa, Mantra and Jñāna (Siddhas). They are presided over by the venerable Vāmeśī, Khecarī, Bhūcarī, Saṃhāriṇī and Raudrī (respectively), in the form of sixty-four Yoginīs.[213] Where these sixty-four abide undivided, that is Rājñī Bhagavatī, who is the sixty-fifth residing on the plane of Raudreśvarī. She is Maṅgalā (the Auspicious One) with all that is auspicious. Mounted on the supreme current, she is in a state of oneness (*sāmarasya*) (with all the others).

That is as follows. 1) The Jñāna Siddhas, as the sixteen vowels, are the vowels which are the first phonemes. 2) The Mantra Siddhas consist of the twenty-five consonants beginning with K up to the letter M. 3) The Melāpa Siddhas are the phonemic measure consisting of vowels and consonants mixed together in twelve ways. Or else they are the energies of OṂ. 4) The eight Śākta Siddhas are the letters beginning with Y and ending with H. 5) The inner energies of Raudrī are those of the first letter–A. These are the Śāmbhava Siddhas. They are described as follows in the secret scriptures (*rahasyaśāstra*):

'In the beginning the head of (A) is Raudrī. The mouth is said to be Vāmā. Ambikā is said to be the arms and Jyeṣṭhā is located on the weapon.'[214]

The first letter is sixty-four fold as the Jñāna, Mantra, Melāpa, Śākta, and Śāmbhava Siddhas, who are the objects of denotation of which (this) is the first letter (A) which induces their inner reflection as their (universal) denota-

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[213] There are 64 energies deployed in five concentric spheres of energies governed by Vāmeśī and the rest along with one in the centre. They are embodied in a form of Yoginīs called Śakinīs. Their male counterparts are called Siddhas, who are accordingly of five kinds, as listed. A detailed account of Vṛndacakra and its contents is presented in three texts that are all called *Mahānayaprakāśa*, the Light of the Great Teaching.

[214] *ādau yasya śiro raudrī vaktraṃ vāmā prakīrtitā |*
ambikā bāhur ity uktā jyeṣṭhā caivāyudhe sthitā ||
cf: śire raudrīṁ (k, kh, g: raudrī) nyaset (kh: nyase) pūrvaṁ vaktre vāmā prakīrtitā (k, kh, g: tāḥ) |
ambikā bāhurityuktā jyeṣṭhā caivāyudhaṁ smṛtam || TS 1/230 ||

These energies are explained in detail in chapter one of the *Tantrasadbhāva.*

tor. Vṛndacakra has thus been explained in terms of the sequence of phonemes. The sequence of consciousness as the venerable Vāmeśī is non-sequential and in reverse.

The method taught according to the (Krama) tradition of the Siddhas and Yoginīs (*siddhayoginīsaṃpradāya*) (is as follows):

'1) Knowledge is the ocean of the Sky of Kaula (the union of Śiva and Śakti) and its form, the Wave. 2) Mantra is the reflective awareness of rest within one's own awakened consciousness. 3) The Melāpa Siddhas are the Void of one's own reflective awareness. 4) The Śākta (Siddhas) are the Great Withdrawal and 5) Śāmbhava is the Sky (of consciousness).'

The final teaching concerning Vṛndacakra is (repeated) many times in the *Triṃśikāvivaraṇa* written in Prākṛt by Bhaṭṭāraka.[215] One should reflect (on that). So, (this will) suffice.

Discussion

The four *mudrās* beginning with Karaṅkiṇī are, along with *Khecarīmudrā*, an important, standard set of five, integrated and internalized into the *Pañcavāha*, taught in the systematized Krama practice in its final, fully developed form as an elaboration of the phases of the flux of cognitive consciousness engaged in the act of perception, marked by the components of its original external liturgy. They are mentioned together in this meditation. Kṣemarāja makes a brief reference to these *mudrās* in his commentary on NT 20/36ab, referring us back to his unfortunately lost commentary on the *Vijñānabhairava*, thus confirming its former existence. He writes:

'1) Here the first Seal is Karaṅkiṇī, (which is used) at the time when one exits from one's own body. 2) (The Seal called) Krodhanā (is used) when invading that body. 3) Lelihānā (operates) when its rays (of sensory energies) are being destroyed, 4) Khecarī when quitting that abode, 5) Bhairavī when attaining one's own heart. I have explained their formation and nature in the venerable *Vijñānabhairavoddyota*.'

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[215] This is a very interesting reference for those who are on the lookout for Krama and Trika texts written in early Kashmir. Unfortunately, this commentary by this mysterious Bhaṭṭāraka ('learned gentleman') has not been recovered.

The reader is referred to the appendix to my translation of chapter 32 of the *Tantrāloka* for citations from Trika and Krama sources concerning *mudrās*, including these five.

One is perplexed to see these Krama teachings appear like a flash of lightning just for a moment, unconnected with what has gone before or what follows. Sandwiched between gazing into space and sitting meditations, Maheśvarānanda sees a sense in this by equating the five sitting meditations that follow with the five Seals. But this view is not supported by any other authority. After two sitting meditations we again gaze into the sky. This is verse 80 which can be read in continuity with verse 76. One cannot help feeling that here, as in other places in the *Vijñānabhairava*, it has been composed by means a series of insertions suggesting that, quite possibly, they have been made by more than one person.

Posturing the Body (78–79)

54) Sitting with one buttock on a soft seat

मृद्वासने स्फिजैकेन हस्तपादौ निराश्रयम् ।
निधाय तत्प्रसङ्गेन परा पूर्णा मतिर्भवेत् ॥ ७८ ॥

mṛdvāsane sphijaikena hastapādau nirāśraye |
vidhāya[216] *tatprasaṅgena parā pūrṇā matir bhavet* || 78 ||

(The yogi should sit) on a soft seat, on one buttock, keeping (his) hands and feet without support. (His) intellect (*mati*) becomes supreme (*parā*) and complete in adherence with that. (78) (77)

Word-for-word meaning: (the yogi should sit) *mṛdvāsane* on a soft seat *sphijaikena* on one buttock *vidhāya* keeping *hastapādau* (his) hands and feet *nirāśraye* without support *matir* (his) intellect *bhavet* becomes *parā pūrṇā* supreme and complete *tatprasaṅgena* in adherence with that.

Swamijī simply says, 'sit on that soft seat only on your buttocks'. He does not say that one needs to sit on one side. *Āṇavopāya* because the meditation begins with a bodily posture and rises to *Śāmbhavopāya* because it develops in a relaxed state free of thoughts and concerns.

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[216] Read with Ānandabhaṭṭa *nirāśraye | vidhāya* for *nirāśrayam | nidhāya*

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Just as he is without support and has made the hands and feet also so, maintaining awareness in all (his) limbs with each part in its entirety, the *rājasika* and *tāmasika* intellect having fallen away, it is made (only of) *sattva*. This is the general meaning. (The yogi should sit) 'on a soft seat' with one buttock upraised. By sitting on a hard seat, raised up (too high) or bent etc., the unwanted consequence is that (the yogi's) contemplative absorption becomes fickle.

Śivopādhyāya

For one who sits on a soft moving seat, with one (of his) buttocks raised, (and so) is (in this way) without support, having made (his) hands and feet in the same way (without support), applying awareness to the whole (body) as well as each limb in all (its) parts by abiding in (that) most excellent posture, mind, whether *sattvika*, *rājasika* or *tāmasika*, falls away.[217] This (practice belongs to the domain of) the individual (embodied state) (*āṇavī*)

55) Meditating on the armpits

उपविश्यासने सम्यक् बाहू कृत्वार्धकुञ्चितौ ।
कक्षव्योम्नि मनः कुर्वन् शममायाति तल्लयात् ॥ ७९ ॥

upaviśyāsane samyag bāhū kṛtvārdhakuñcitau |
kakṣavyomni manaḥ kurvan śamam āyāti tallayāt || 79 ||

Having sat on a seat and half bent the arms properly (as required), fixing the mind on the space under the armpits, by merging into that, peace comes. (79)

Word-for-word meaning: *upaviśyāsane* Having sat on a seat *kṛtvārdhakuñcitau* and half bent *bāhū* the arms *samyag* properly (as required), *manaḥ kurvan* fixing the mind *kakṣavyomni* on the space under the armpits *tallayāt* by merging into that, *śamam* peace *āyāti* comes.

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[217] According to this explanation the intellect is 'supreme' (*parā*) in the sense of beyond the three Qualities. Another way to understand this expression is that the intellect becomes the Goddess Parā who is 'complete'—*pūrṇā*.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

āsane upaviśya bāhū kakṣavyomni saṃkucitau kṛtvā tallayena śamam āyāti || 79 ||

Having sat on a seat and half-bent the arms into the space under the armpits, tranquillity comes by merging into that.

Śivopādhyāya

ardhakuñcitau-sāmikuñcitau |
kakṣavyomni ubhaya-kakṣyākāśe || 79 ||
bhairavīṃ bhūmim āha

(The two arms) half-bent (means) bent in the space under the armpits (which means) in the space within both armpits.

56) Staring at an object, the mind, free of thought.

स्थूलरूपस्य भावस्य स्तब्धां दृष्टिं निपात्य च।
अचिरेण निराधारं मनः कृत्वा शिवं व्रजेत् ॥ ८० ॥

sthūlarūpasya bhāvasya stabdhāṃ dṛṣṭiṃ nipātya ca |
acireṇa nirādhāraṃ manaḥ kṛtvā śivaṃ vrajet || 80 ||

Having cast (his) gaze[218] fixed, (without blinking), on a gross object (directing his attention inward) and making the mind free of the support (of thought), (the yogi) soon reaches Śiva. (80)

Word-for-word meaning: *nipātya* having cast *dṛṣṭiṃ* (his) gaze *stabdhāṃ* fixed, (without blinking), *bhāvasya sthūlarūpasya* on a gross object (directing

[218] One may take *'dṛk'*—'the sense of sight' to stand, by way of example, for all the senses. Cf. 76: 'One should direct one's gaze into the sky (or an empty space) that is variously illumined, for example, by the light of the sun (during the day), or a lamp (that shines at night) and the like. There itself one's own essential nature manifests.' Also 84: 'One who, immobile, looking at a pure (cloudless) sky, fixing (his) eyes (on it) without a break, at that very moment, O Goddess, acquires Bhairava's nature (*vapuṣ*).' And VBh 113 'Listen properly, O Goddess, I will tell (you) the teaching. Liberation arises immediately when the two eyes are just fixed (without movement).'

his attention inward) *manaḥ kṛtvā* making the mind *nirādhāraṃ* free of the support (of thought) *acireṇa* (the yogi) soon *vrajet* reaches *Śivaṃ* Śiva.

Swamijī: 'Just put before yourself some well-ornamented, beautifully shaped lady, or beautifully shaped flower vase, or anything; put some very attractive thing before yourself.... put your eyes on it without any movement of the eyelids ... at the same time, simultaneously, don't let any thought appear in your mind. (Then) he becomes Śiva at once, in no time.... There is not an object, because in the beginning there is not an object at all.... Only beauty is the object; not the object.... The mind must be caught looking at that *prathamābhāsa* (first impulse of looking). Because he has not to look at the girl; he has not to look at her features. Only beauty, beauty is counted there. You have not to touch it, you have not to talk to it, you have not to do anything with it—it is just, look at it and you will enter.

My Swamijī (Swami Mahatābakāk) went to some invitation. There was a marriage function, and the tea was served in the room, and Swamijī was seated, and I was also seated. By chance, there was a small, beautiful girl with the best ornaments sitting in front of my master, and he went inside. He was only looking at her and he went inside. Then afterwards, he came out and he told me that he had held this *dhāraṇā* there.'[219]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By not opening or shutting the eyes, having thus fixed the gaze and rendered the mind devoid of support, not thinking anything at all, he attains Śiva, that is, oneness with the supreme soul.

Śivopādhyāya

'Casting (his) the gaze' without opening or closing the eyes on 'a gross object' such as a jar, (the yogi soon attains Śiva) because (the gaze) is fixed,[220] turning it inward, having done (what is required so that) it is 'free of support', that is, devoid of thought.

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[219] Note that no mention of this practice is found in the commentaries. They refer only to fixing the gaze on an object. Nothing is said about its beauty or otherwise.

[220] Read *stabdhāt* for *śabdāt*.

57) Uttering the letter H mentally

मध्यजिह्वे स्फारितास्ये मध्ये निक्षिप्य चेतनाम् ।
होच्चारं मनसा कुर्वंस्ततः शान्ते प्रलीयते ॥ ८१ ॥

madhyajihve sphāritāsye madhye nikṣipya cetanām |
hoccāraṃ manasā kurvaṃs tataḥ śānte pralīyate || 81 ||

The tongue (turned up) into the centre (of the nasal cavity), having cast (one's) attention (there) in the middle of the mouth, gapping wide open whilst uttering (the letter) H mentally, (the breath) then dissolves away into the Tranquil One. (81)

Word-for-word meaning: *madhyajihve* the tongue (turned up) into the centre (of the nasal cavity), *nikṣipya* having cast *cetanām* (one's) attention (there) *madhye* in the middle *sphāritāsye* of the mouth gapping wide open *hoccāraṃ kurvaṃs* whilst uttering the (letter) H, *manasā* mentally (the breath) *tataḥ* then *pralīyate* dissolves away *śānte* into the Tranquil One.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The meaning is that casting the attention (*buddhi*) on the tongue in the centre, that is, in the gap in between when the mouth is wide open in this way and uttering (the letter) 'H' mentally, the Tranquil One manifests.

Śivopādhyāya

'Casting the attention on the tongue' in the centre, that is, in the gap in between, when the mouth is wide open in this way that is, in the middle of the uncontracted mouth and uttering (the letter) 'H' mentally[221] that is, uttering the measure of the letter H which is Unstruck Sound (mentally), he become tranquil in (the course of) inhalation HAṂ and exhalation SAḤ in accord with the stated teaching: '(The breath) goes out with the letter S and enters again with (the sound of) the letter H.'[222]

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[221] In what follows, Śivopādhyāya struggles to adjust the utterance of the letter H with the sound of the flow of the exhalation and inhalation that is HAṀ and SAḤ. He does this by distinguishing the sound of the breath that is heard inwardly from the 'sound' of H repeated mentally.

[222] The printed text here reads: *ucchvāse haṁ, niḥśvāse saḥ | sakāreṇa bahiryāti*

In accord with this teaching, when (practicing) this Khecarīmudrā, there is no exit (of the breath) with (the sound of) the letter S (that accompanies it), it is said to be the utterance of (the letter) H. What remains (to be said is that this is done), having fixed the gaze on the centre between the eyebrows. As is said in the *Vivekamārtaṇḍa*:

'The seal of Khecarī is (formed when) the tongue is curled back and introduced into the cavity of the skull (at the back of the nasal cavity) and the gaze is (fixed) between the eyebrows.'[223]

The Lord Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana has also said beginning with:

'Having touched (the body) externally (several times) and (directed) the outer eyes in between the eyebrows and made the exhaled and inhaled breath that move within the nostrils equal ...'

Posturing the Body (82–83)

58) Meditating that the body is without support

आसने शयने स्थित्वा निराधारं विभावयन्
स्वदेहं मनसि क्षीणे क्षणात् क्षीणाशयो भवेत् ॥ ८२ ॥

āsane śayane sthitvā nirādhāraṃ vibhāvayan[224] |
svadehaṃ manasi kṣīṇe kṣaṇāt kṣīṇāśayo bhavet || 82 ||

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hakāreṇa viśet punaḥ | Although the printed text says that 'inhalation is HAṂ and exhalation SAḤ.' The citation that follows inhalation should be SAḤ and exhalation HAṂ. One of the two is clearly wrong. According to the commentary on v 156) (154cd-155ab), the second one is not correct.

[223] This is the form of Khecarīmudrā that is well known to the texts on Haṭhayoga from about the 13th century onwards. Surprisingly, although the Seal of the Skyfarer appears repeatedly in the early Śaiva Āgamas of all schools and Abhinava considers it to be the ground of all the Seals (TĀ 32/4), it is never taught in this form. Conversely, other forms of this Seal are not well represented in the later sources. The late form is very popular nowadays. It is part of the Kriyā Yoga practice taught in the tradition that Yogānanda brought to the West. It is also one of the four practices into which the followers of Revant Singh ('Guru Mahārājji') are initiated. It is a basic common *bandha* in Haṭhayoga that has made its way into all the contemporary mainstream Yoga traditions.

[224] Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *vibhāvayet* for *vibhāvayan*; *svadehe* for *svadehaṃ* and *bhūtāśayo* for *kṣīṇāśayo*.

(Either sitting) on a seat or (lying) on a bed, meditating (*vibhāvayan*) on one's own body as being without support, when the mind ceases, within a moment (the yogi) is free of (all his binding) dispositions (*āśaya*). (82)

Word-for-word meaning: *āsane* (either sitting) on a seat *śayane sthitvā* (or lying) on a bed *vibhāvayan* meditating *svadehaṃ* on one's own body *nirādhāraṃ* as being without support *manasi kṣīṇe* when the mind ceases *kṣaṇāt* within a moment *kṣīṇāśayo bhavet* (the yogi) is free of (all his binding) dispositions.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(What is meant here is sitting) in the body not (just) 'on a seat'. Lying on a bed thinking that it is without support (means) "I am not the body. I have no body". This is the notion that there is no support for one who is on the same equal (balanced) state. By thinking in this way, when the mind wanes and falls away (and so) too the mass of objectivity, he who aspires to the elemental state (*bhūtāśaya*) accomplishes (the conquest of) the (material) elements.

Śivopādhyāya

Meditating on one's own body as devoid of support when one's mind has waned away when it has come forth from the state of delight (that arises) when the (the body) is wrapped in a bed cover made of antelope skin, reams of silk, betel leaves, feathers, raw silk, and cool cloth, the awareness of one's own body also falls away. (Thereby) reflecting on one's own body as devoid of (any) support such as that of a mattress and the like, (the yogi) is immediately 'free of (all his binding) dispositions (*āśaya*)'. The meaning is that he is devoid of (all) latent traces (of past Karma).

59) Meditation on the rocking of the body

चलासने स्थितस्याथ शनैर्वा देहचालनात् ।
प्रशान्ते मानसे भावे देवि दिव्यौघमाप्नुयात् ॥ ८३ ॥

calāsane sthitasyātha śanair vā dehacālanāt |
praśānte mānase bhāve devi divyaugham āpnuyāt || 83 ||

O Goddess, whether seated on a moving seat (of a vehicle) or by rocking (one's own) body slowly when the mind is in a tranquil state, one attains

the Divine Current (*divyaugha*) (of the assembly of divine worlds and supreme yogis).[225] (83)

Word-for-word meaning: *calāsane* on a moving seat *sthitasyātha* seated *śanair vā* or slowly *dehacālanāt* by rocking the body slowly *praśānte* in a tranquil state *mānase bhāve* (in) mental state *devi* O Goddess *divyaugham* the divine current *āpnuyāt* attains.

Swamijī: 'On horseback, if your body is moving up and down, put your mind in between the up and down. Or, if you move your body like swaying, then you have to ignore the right-side movement and the left-side movement, and centralize your mind in-between. There you can find your mind in the appeased state.' 'This is *Śāktopāya*'.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(Seated on) a moving seat (of a vehicle) such as a horse, while moving the body, '**when the mind is in a tranquil state**' having experienced the '**divine current**' that is the assembly of divine worlds and supreme yogis, one attains its reality level which is radiant energy. This is the sense (of this teaching).

Śivopādhyāya

One who is seated on the moving seat of a vehicle such as a cart, elephant or horse attains the flow of the bliss of the supreme Sky of Consciousness by the movement of the body brought about by that vehicle or by oneself alone by the slow motion of the body when the mind is in a tranquil state.

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[225] I have added Ānandabhaṭṭa's explanation in brackets in the course of my translation. The teachings are transmitted in three phases called 'currents'. The first is the Divyaugha—the Divine Current. This begins with the Deity and flows through the higher regions of spiritual beings. Next comes the Siddhaugha—the Current of Siddhas. Here the teaching flows through the current of enlightened and accomplished beings—siddhas—who mark the emergence from the higher realms and stand at the boundary of entry into the human realm where the teachings flow through the Current of Human Beings—Mānavāugha. According to Swamijī, the 'Divine Current'—*divyaugham*—is the state of *cidākāśa*—the Sky of Consciousness—explaining it as does Śivopādhyāya. Ānandabhaṭṭa explains differently.

Meditating on the Sky outside and within (84–88)[226]

60) Gazing at a cloudless sky

आकाशं विमलं पश्यन् कृत्वा दृष्टिं निरन्तराम् ।
स्तब्धात्मा तत्क्षणाद्देवि भैरवं वपुराप्नुयात् ॥ ८४ ॥

ākāśaṃ vimalaṃ paśyan kṛtvā dṛṣṭiṃ nirantarām |
stabdhātmā tatkṣaṇād devi bhairavaṃ vapur āpnuyāt || 84 ||

Beholding a clear (cloudless) sky, having made (his) gaze (constant) without a break, he (whose body, senses and mind are perfectly) immobile attains, O Goddess, that very instant, Bhairava's nature.[227] (84)

Word-for-word meaning: *paśyan* beholding *vimalaṃ* a clear (cloudless) *ākāśaṃ* sky, *dṛṣṭiṃ kṛtvā* having made his gaze *nirantarām* (constant) without a break *stabdhātmā* he (whose body, senses and mind are perfectly) immobile *āpnuyāt* attains *devi* O Goddess *tatkṣaṇād* that very instant *bhairavaṃ* Bhairava's *vapur* body (and nature).

Śivopādhyāya[228]

(The yogi's gaze should be) '**without a break**', that is, uninterrupted because the (eyes), neither opening nor closing, (do not blink). He is '**immobile**', that is, his body does not move.

Discussion

According to Swamijī, this meditation is solely *Śāmbhavopāya*, not *Śāktopāya*. He says that this is because 'there is no 'two''. Presumably, he means that the practice does not entail any, even preliminary, sense of separation between the one who views the sky and his object that would allow for the formation of thought constructs so that practice would be in the domain of the Empowered Means.

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[226] Gazing into space is taught in verse 76. The same theme is presented in various forms here in 84 to 88. It is as if the mediations in between 76 and 84 have been inserted later.

[227] Cf. also VBh verses 85, 92, and 147.

[228] This verse is omitted in Ānandabhaṭṭa's recension.

Abhinava probably has this meditation in mind when he writes:

'If you view the pervasive sky, (staring at it) with (intense) concentration whilst recollecting the (appropriate) Mantra, what other (greater) purity can there be than this?'[229]

61) Imagine the whole sky is in the head as Bhairava's form

लीनं मूर्ध्नि वियत्सर्वं भैरवत्वेन भावयेत् ।
तत्सर्वं भैरवाकारतेजस्तत्त्वं समाविशेत् ॥ ८५ ॥

līnaṃ mūrdhni viyat sarvaṃ bhairavatvena bhāvayet |
tat sarvaṃ bhairavākāratejastattvaṃ samāviśet || 85 ||

(The yogi) should imagine (*bhāvayet*) that the entire (expanse of the) sky is merged within (his) head as Bhairava's state. (Then he and) all that (exists) penetrates (and is absorbed) into the reality (which is) the radiant energy (*tejas*) of Bhairava's form. (85) (84)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhāvayet* (The yogi) should imagine that *viyat sarvaṃ* the entire (expanse of the) sky *līnaṃ* is merged *mūrdhni* within (his) head *bhairavatvena* as Bhairava's state. *tat sarvaṃ* (Then he and) all that (exists) *samāviśet* penetrates (and is absorbed) into *bhairavākāratejastattvaṃ* the reality (which is) the radiant energy (*tejas*) of Bhairava's form.

Swamijī: 'You have to imagine that your skull is as broad as the *ākāśa*, and (that) the *ākāśa* is situated in your skull. It is just imagination.... You should consider that it is the Bhairava state. He enters into that *prakāśa*, which is the embodiment of the Bhairava state. *Śāktopāya* ('because there are two'—outside and inner *ākāśa*).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The sense is that the Brahman shines forth as one contemplates that all that (exists), namely, 'blue' and 'yellow' etc, is all 'merged', that is, closely held together, is Śiva.

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[229] TĀ 15/57.

Śivopādhyāya

'As is the (didactic) etymology of the (the word) 'liṅga' (so too here) by saying that he makes (everything) merge (*līnaṃ gamayati*) (is meant that) the Void (*vyiyat*) in the Heart and the Cavity of Brahmā dissolves away into the supreme plane.'[230]

'That is also replete with all the things that have been emitted[231] and internalized. It assimilates (*grasana*) the aspect which is the radiant energy (*tejoṃśa*) of Māyā that engenders duality and so,[232] because it withdraws all (things into consciousness), it is black and bears the form of darkness.'[233]

According to (this) teaching, that is found in the *Mālinīvārtika*, all the universe is in the head, which is primary (and so) is called 'the Heart' and 'the Cavity of Brahmā'. The 'Void' (here refers either) to the form of the sky or darkness. (The yogi) should think that it is completely full of all things that have been internalized (within it) because it withdraws all things and (he should think that it) is time and is made of the Sky (*ākāśa*). After that, everything (participates) in the penetration into reality of the Supreme Light, which is Bhairava's form. By thinking that everything bears a dark form, characterized as stated, the astonishing fruit is the (the realization that) state (of all things) as the Supreme Light (of consciousness). In other words, the yogi penetrates (and is absorbed) into the reality (which is) the radiant energy (*tejas*), that is, the Light of Consciousness. This imagination (*vikalpanā*) of the stated meditation on the Void (*śūnyabhāvanā*) is in the (individual) *Āṇava* state (*āṇavī bhūḥ*).[234]

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[230] This verse is not found in the *Mālinīvijayavārtika* that has been recovered.

[231] Read as suggested by the editor of the printed text,—*sṛṣṭa-* for–*spaṣṭa-*

[232] Read with the MVV—*grasanāc ca tat* for—*grasanātmakam*. Hanneder (1998) translates 'because it devours the particles of light (*tejoṃśa*) that belong to Māyā and foster duality.' In the MVV, between this sentence and the previous one, Abhinava inserts a reference to two verses of the *Vijñānabhairava*. These are the ones we are examining here (i.e. 85) and the one after next. Both are meditations on the sky, the former is within the head and the latter on that of a dark, stormy night (85 (84) and 87 (86)). According to Abhinava, the darkness refers to the dark Southern or Right Face of Sadāśiva because it is the body of Bhairava within which the sixty-four Bhairava Tantras are revealed.

[233] MVV 1/383cd-384. Also quoted in TĀv ad 1/18.

[234] This is the state at the beginning of the creative meditation, when it focuses on the darkness in the confined space of the head. If it develops into the experience

62) Bhairava as the three states of consciousness and inner darkness

किंचिज्ज्ञातं द्वैतदायि बाह्यालोकस्तमः पुनः ।
विश्वादि भैरवं रूपं ज्ञात्वानन्तप्रकाशभृत् ॥ ८६ ॥

kiṃcij jñātaṃ dvaitadāyi bāhyālokas tamaḥ punaḥ |
viśvādi bhairavaṃ rūpaṃ jñātvānantaprakāśabhṛt || 86 ||

(The yogi) possesses infinite Light once known Bhairava's nature as the waking and the other (states), namely, 1) (waking, in which only) something is known that generates duality, 2) (dreaming, in which) the light (shines that illumines the mental traces of) the outer (world) and, again, 3) (deep sleep, which is) darkness. (86) (85)

Word-for-word meaning: *anantaprakāśabhṛt* (the yogi) possesses infinite Light *jñātvā* once known *bhairavaṃ rūpaṃ* Bhairava's nature *viśvādi* as the waking and other (states) *kiṃcij* (namely 1) waking, in which) something *jñātaṃ* is known *dvaitadāyi* that generates duality *bāhyālokas* (2) dreaming, in which) the light (shines that illumines the mental traces of) the outer (world) *tamaḥ punaḥ* and, again (3) deep sleep, which is) darkness.

Swamijī, as does Śivopādhyāya, understands the verse as translated. They explain that the *dhāraṇā* is on the three states of consciousness. Swamijī reads '*kiṃcij jñātvā dvaitadāyī*'(waking is the state in which) having known something that generates duality' for *kiṃcij jñātaṃ dvaitadāyi*—'(waking in which) something is known that generates duality'. The dream state is called '*bāhyāloka*', although the expression literally means 'outer light' or 'light on what is outer'. Swamijī says, 'when *bāhya* appears in the dreaming state, because you experience that *bāhya* in your *āloka*, in your own *prakāśa*, in your own thought, that is a dream. *Bāhya* means the outside world, the *āloka* of the outside world. Where is the *āloka* of the outside world? ... In the dreaming state, you dream only those dreams which you have already seen in wakefulness.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having meditated initially on duality (as exemplified by the doubt one may have viewing a standing figure in the darkness): "(Is this a) pillar or a man?"

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of the radiant energy of Bhairava's infinite 'body', the yogi enters the Śāmbhava state, free of the thought constructs and limitations of duality.

Then (on the) external light of the moon and sun etc., then darkness—having meditated that all that is Bhairava's form because He is pluriform, (the Yogi) becomes Bhairava who is infinite Light.[235]

Śivopādhyāya

The field of the waking state bestows the perception of relative distinctions and consists of that which is made an object of just some knowledge (*kiṃcinmātra*). such as a jar or a wall. Similarly, the light of external things that are born from the residual traces of (entities perceived in) the waking state is the field of the dreaming state. Again, that is, furthermore, 'darkness' is the experience (produced by) ignorance and is present in deep sleep. Such is the consciousness that identifies with these three states, waking and the rest. The words 'the rest' refer to the (corresponding cosmic states called) *taijasa* and *prājña* etc.

(These states are as follows.)[236]1) Here, (in this regard,) this (is the interpretation according to) the manner (of reasoning) (*prakriyā*) of the discipline of the Vedānta. There are two aspects, namely, Māyā and ignorance (*avidyā*) and there is Prakṛti (Nature), which is the state of balanced equality of the Qualities (*sattva, rajas* and *tamas* of which it consists). Māyā is predominantly pure *sattva*. Ignorance is predominantly sullied *sattva*. The Self, which is consciousness, is reflected within Māyā as (the experience that) "I know and do all this". (At the pure universal level), this is Īśvara who is the foundation of the attributes of omniscience and the rest (of the Supreme Deity's attributes). And he is one. The (universal) Self, which is (pure, divine) consciousness, reflected within ignorance, is the individual soul and is dependent on it. (Its experience is in the form) "I am the doer (and) I am the one who experiences (the consequences of Karma)." (The individual souls are) many, (embodied as) gods and animals etc. Individual souls identify with the ego that (operates) in the domain of the subtle body (that transmigrates and so is) called '*ātivāhika*' ('transported along'). They are called 'Taijasa' and project onto themselves the

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[235] Its clear from his commentary that Ānandabhaṭṭa understood this verse to mean: '(The yogi) possesses (and becomes) infinite Light once known Bhairava's nature (as the state of doubt in which only) something is known that generates duality, as the light of the outer (world) and, again, (as) darkness.'

[236] Alternative explanation from the point of view of Advaita Vedānta.

qualities of the inner mental organ, such as (the experiences that) "I am happy, I am suffering, I am hungry, I am thirsty" and the like.

2) The individual souls that identify with separate egos and belong to (that form of) ignorance called the 'causal body' (*kāraṇaśarīra*) are said to be Prājñas. 3) The Taijasa souls who identify with the fatness and thinness and the like of the gross body of each one individually are called *Viśva*. 4) The Supreme Lord, who is subject to the secondary adjunct of Māyā, which is defined as stated, is called Hiraṇyagarbha by identifying the subtle body of (His) differentiated (*sakala*) (aspect). 5) Due to that same (Lord's) identification with the gross body of (His) differentiated (*sakala*) (aspect), (He is) called Vaiśvānara.

The experience (*bhoga*) Prājña souls have of ignorance is in deep sleep due to their identification with the field of ignorance. Having arisen out of that, (their) reflective awareness is of the sort "I was unconscious. I do not know myself." The Supreme Lord's identification with ignorance takes place due to the superimposition of all these Prājña souls that (makes each believe that) "I am the agent". There is certainly no direct (identification between them) because (the Lord) possess the (higher) attributes of omniscience and the rest (that the individual souls do not).

Moreover, the Lord's ignorance is withdrawn when cosmic destruction takes place and his condition is such that he is given over to the sleep of Yoga. (Ignorance in that state of the soul continues to) persist in the form of latent residual traces. Otherwise, how would it be possible for the individual soul's condition to arise if it were not for the flowing forth of the ignorance which is the identification with (limited) agency that (emerges) from the state of (transcendent) indifference (when the period of deep sleep is over).

All this, that has issued forth from the unfolding expanse of *Viśva* and *Taijasa* etc., is a form of Bhairava. Once known that, (the yogi) becomes infinite Light.

Discussion

According to the Upaniṣads, *Viśva* (Everything) is the name of the waking state. *Tejas* (Radiant Energy) is the name of the dream state and *Prājña* (Wisdom) is the name of deep sleep. The yogi should realize that they are all Bhairava, as no state of consciousness differs from consciousness. When the yogi has come to know this, he enters into the *unmīlana* (expanded) state (of

consciousness) in an instant after the *nimīlana* (contracted, withdrawn state of consciousness) ceases when waking up to the knowledge that the Lord's infinite Light shines in all the states of waking, dreaming and deep sleep. They are known in this way by the awareness that develops in the centre between two states in which the individual merges and becomes one with Deity's unconditioned consciousness. According to Swamijī, this meditation is 'Āṇava sentenced to Śāmbhava state, *Śāmbhavopāya* and its state, *unmīlana*.'

In other words, practice begins in the individual means with the identification with body and its perception in the waking state. Then moving through the world of thought constructs, which would be the domain of the Empowered Means, the lucid yogi enters into pure thought-free consciousness. For those who are not yogis, this is the final end of the closure and contraction of consciousness in deep sleep, for the yogi it is its expansion—*unmīlana*—unfettered by the restrictions of thought.

(Śivopādhyāya continues:) having in this way introduced (this) wonderful meditation (*dhāraṇā*) on (inner) darkness, he (goes on) to talk about the external meditation on darkness.

63) Attaining Bhairava's nature by gazing at the dark sky at night

एवमेव दुर्निशायां कृष्णपक्षागमे चिरम् ।
तैमिरं भावयन् रूपं भैरवं रूपमेष्यति ॥ ८७ ॥

evam eva durniśāyāṃ kṛṣṇapakṣāgame ciram |
taimiraṃ bhāvayan rūpaṃ bhairavaṃ rūpam eṣyati || 87 ||

In the very same way, (the yogi) engaged in contemplating for a long time the (awesome) dark form (of the sky) on a dark (stormy) night when the dark lunar fortnight begins,[237] attains Bhairava's nature. (87) (86)

Word-for-word meaning *evam eva* in the very same way, *bhāvayan* (the yogi) engaged in contemplating *ciram* for a long time *taimiraṃ* the (awesome)

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[237] None of the commentators refer to this but nonetheless it is clear that the *Vijñānabhairava* means that this practice is best performed in the night of the New Moon when there is no moon, on when the dark fortnight has just come, i.e. begins. We can also understand the expression to mean 'when the dark fortnight has come' in a general sense to refer to the entire fortnight.

dark *rūpaṃ* form (of the sky) *durniśāyāṃ* on a dark (stormy) night *kṛṣṇa-pakṣāgame* when the dark lunar fortnight begins, *eṣyati* attains *bhairavaṃ rūpam* Bhairava's nature.

Swamijī says that this practice is done best on a stormy, rainy night but agrees that it can also be done even when it is not raining. He says that 'there should be rain because the continuity of that sound of rain, rainfall, will carry you there swiftly. When there is no rainfall, then there will be other sounds also to interfere with your meditation ... (it) will be carried by the continuous sound of that rainfall. This is *Śāktopāya*.' '*Śāmbhavopāya* is soundless.' So, if you are in a place where there is perfect silence, this is the level of practice.[238]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

A 'dark night' is one in which (the sky is) covered with clouds. The black, dark blue etc., frightening form within (the night sky's) blinding darkness, great darkness and darkness is stamped with (the presence of) Bhairava, that is, it is marked with Bhairava's seal. It cannot be seen because it is frightening. Engaged in contemplating that (the yogi) attains imperishable bliss because that form inspires wonder.

Śivopādhyāya

'In the very same way' (means) like the darkness mentioned before (in the previous meditation). (This meditation is practiced) on a 'dark night', that is, one in which (the sky is) covered with clouds. This contemplation (*bhāvanā*) on darkness is said to be with the eyes open (*unmīlana*). He (now) talks about the contemplation with (the eyes) closed.

Discussion

In TĀv 1/18 Jayaratha quotes this meditation in relation to his presentation of Sadāśiva's five faces that utter the Āgamas. He writes that 'the point is that the

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[238] Practice in *Śāktopāya* serves to remove mundane thoughts and elevate through higher thoughts to the ultimate notion of the yogi's true Śiva nature. In *Śāmbhavopāya*, there is no such process because it is grounded in non-conceptual consciousness in which the mind is silent.

Southern or Right Face of Sadāśiva is dark because it is the body of Bhairava within which the sixty-four Bhairava Tantras are revealed.'

64) Darkness in front with the eyes closed

एवमेव निमील्यादौ नेत्रे कृष्णाभमग्रतः ।
प्रसार्य भैरवं रूपं भावयंस्तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ ८८ ॥

evam eva nimīlyādau netre kṛṣṇābham agrataḥ |
prasārya bhairavaṃ rūpaṃ bhāvayaṃs tanmayo bhavet || 88 ||

In the very same way, initially closing the eyes (and meditating on) the darkness in front (and then opening them), extending out, contemplating (*bhāvayan*) (that dark) form of Bhairava, one becomes of that same nature. (88) (87)

Word-for-word meaning: *evam eva* In the very same way, *nimīlyādau* initially closing *netre* the eyes (and meditating on) *kṛṣṇābham* the darkness *agrataḥ* in front, *prasārya* extending out, *bhāvayaṃs* contemplating *bhairavaṃ rūpaṃ* (that dark) form of Bhairava *tanmayo bhavet* one becomes of that same nature.

Swamijī agrees with the commentators. He says 'After closing your eyes, you see nothing but darkness.... Then for a considerable period, you have to meditate on that darkness and feel that this is the state of Bhairava; this darkness is Bhairava, the vacuum of Bhairava.... then you should abruptly open your eyes and, if you don't see anything before you, then your meditation is successful.... If he sees particular pots, finished ... this is incomplete and you have to repeat it again and again.' This meditation is done in a room in which the light is very dim, not in broad daylight. If successful, the yogi becomes one with that Bhairava state of darkness. This is *Śāktopāya*'[239]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Even if it is not a night of the dark lunar fortnight, having closed one's eyes and known the dark, black form (within oneself). That itself is Bhairava's

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[239] This meditation is in *Śāktopāya* because it is a mental practice but although there is an outer object, it is subtle, evanescent. It is not *Āṇavopāya* because the practice does not involve the body.

astonishing form. (The yogi thus) becomes one with that form (which is Bhairava's form and nature).

Śivopādhyāya

Even if it is not a dark stormy night of the dark lunar fortnight or the like, (the yogi can practice this meditation by) first closing (his) eyes and contemplating the dark, black form of Bhairava (as the darkness before him) and then after that, having opened the eyes, contemplating Bhairava's dark form (as what appears to his sight), (the yogi) becomes the light (of consciousness). (Now he goes on to) talk about the Śāmbhava plane, which is the introverted means, free of thought constructs.

65) Entry into the Void and the revelation of the Self by a blow to the body

यस्य कस्येन्द्रियस्यापि व्याघाताच्च निरोधतः
प्रविष्टस्याद्वये शून्ये तत्रैवात्मा प्रकाशते ॥ ८९ ॥

yasya kasyendriyasyāpi vyāghātāc ca nirodhataḥ
praviṣṭasyādvaye śūnye tatraivātmā prakāśate || 89 ||

(By blocking the function) of any one of the senses by a blow (from an external object) and by blocking (it voluntarily by striking oneself), the Self (*ātman*) (of the yogi) who has (thereby) entered the non-dual Void manifests there. (89) (88)

Word-for-word meaning: *yasya kasyendriyasyāpi* (By blocking the function) of any one of the senses *vyāghātāc* by a blow (from an external object) *ca* and *nirodhataḥ* by blocking (it voluntarily by striking oneself), *ātmā* the Self (of the yogi) *praviṣṭasyādvaye* who has (thereby) entered the non-dual *śūnye* Void *prakāśate* manifests *tatraiva* there.

Swamijī explains that by the Self—*ātman*—here is meant the supreme state of Voidness, whereas Śivopādhyā says that it is supreme consciousness (*caitanya*).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The Self shines forth when (the senses are) dull because of which (their) capacity (to function) externally stops. (This also happens) by a blow (from an

external object), that is, due to (any) number of opposing (forces) and so by blocking (the function of the senses, the yogi) enters thereby into the non-dual Void, devoid of duality, by taking rest in the inner plane (of consciousness). This is the sense (of the teaching).

Śivopādhyāya

Just after (the yogi) has entered into the non-dual Void and is well fixed in the introverted plane (of consciousness) due to a (violent) blow dealt by an outer (enemy), or by blocking (his senses by himself), (whether) that takes place spontaneously or else by exerting an effort, his supreme consciousness, shines (radiantly).

66) Meditation on the Letter A

अबिन्दुमविसर्गं च अकारं जपतो महान् ।
उदेति देवि सहसा ज्ञानौघः परमेश्वरः ॥ ९० ॥

abindum avisargaṃ ca akāraṃ japato mahān |
udeti devi sahasā jñānaughaḥ parameśvaraḥ || 90 ||

O Goddess, by repeating the great letter 'A' without *bindu* (Ṁ) and *visarga* (Ḥ), the Supreme Lord, who is a torrent of knowledge, arises (spontaneously all) at once. (90)

Word-for-word meaning: *devi* O Goddess, *japato* by repeating *mahān* the great *akāraṃ* letter A *abindum* without *bindu ca* and *avisargaṃ* without *visarga parameśvaraḥ* the Supreme Lord, *jñānaughaḥ* who is a torrent of knowledge, *udeti* arises *sahasā* (spontaneously all) at once.

Swamijī says this practice induces *Cakitamudrā* [the Seal of Astonishment, also called *Bhairavīmudrā*] but there is no reference to it by the commentators. Swamijī explains 'Bhairavī *mudrā* is when all your organs are wide open. (Here,) it is only with the mouth, the recitation of 'A'. (It is an external recitation) 'It is not 'A-A-A', it is not long 'A'; it is (the A of) 'AṀ' and 'AḤ'. So, it is *Cakitamudrā*, the astonishing pose when you open your mouth[240] ... just open

[240] The Sanskrit 'A' recited by itself is a closed vowel (all the other vowels are open).

your mouth, that is all—that is 'A'; it is recited without 'Ṁ' and without *visarga* ('Ḥ')…. Firstly, there is *Āṇava's* touch, but in the end, it is *Śāktopāya*, pure *Śāktopāya*.' Swamijī goes on to explain that there is another variety of *Cakitamudrā* which is in *Śāmbhavopāya* and is practically the same as *Bhairavīmudrā*. You enter into this variety of *Cakitamudrā* 'when you are astonished, when you become astonished by seeing something new … when you see some hideous thing …. Hideous, furious, terrifying thing … For instance, when he sees a lion in front of him, he will (automatically) go into *Cakitamudrā*. When he goes into *Cakitamudrā*, the lion will not touch him at all—he is Bhairava.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

A torrent of knowledge emerges for one who, engaged in breath retention, omitting the *bindu* and *visarga* of AṂ and AḤ, repeatedly recites in the same way, just 'A'. Once abandoned thought and the like by abiding in a state (of pure consciousness) devoid of all thought, what remains is that itself. This is the meaning. As (the Upaniṣad declares): 'thou art that'.

Śivopādhyāya

Bindu (the nasal stop Ṁ) is undivided cognitive awareness (*saṃvedana*), the knowledge of non-duality. Visarga (Ḥ) is the act of emanating the perception of relative distinctions (*bheda*). It is the emanation of the consonants beginning with K, that are the energies Brāhmī and the rest (of the Mothers). The letter A (*akāra*), devoid of (Ṁ and Ḥ) is the first letter (of the alphabet). It has no cause (*kāra*). Anuttara (the Absolute) is like this. It is the state (of consciousness) that is devoid of thought. By reflecting on that, in that (very moment), the Supreme Lord, who generates the flow of many (kinds of) perceptions (*jñāna*), arises.

Here, (concerning this, the Upaniṣads proclaim) 'the Brahman is one alone without a second' and 'everything is indeed the Brahman'. (Neither) oneness nor duality befit Anuttara, which is (beyond) the domain of speech and mind.

However, linked to *anusvāra* and *visarga* it becomes as open 'A'. This is the point of stating that the 'A' to be recited is such. Otherwise the mouth would remain half closed, whereas the mouth for this practice should be wide open.

This is because, as (the supreme reality) of which there is nothing higher, there is not even the slightest object of reflection[241]

The one who is on the plane of Anuttara 'spoke without speaking; he remained silent' in accord with the teaching (*artha*) of the Veda. Here, (concerning the phoneme) without *visarga* and the letter A, according to supplementary commentary (*paribhāṣā* on Pāṇini's grammar), there is no phonemic conjunction (*sandhi*) (with a following phoneme (as the rule applies that) 'or else it is natural (that two letters) with the same (phonemic) quality (should merge) in a common vowel (*ekadharmiṇo vā savarṇe prakṛtiḥ*).

'Fie on her (the queen) and (fie) on him (her lover). (Fie) on Madana (the god of love) and on this (my queen) and on me (the king).'[242]

'He whose mother is the Goddess Umā.'

Having reflected on this, the unexcelled state (of Anuttara), the venerable Bhagavatapāda has concluded:

'There is no oneness. Where could there be a second other than that? Nor is there a state of (liberated) isolation, nor its absence, nor the Void nor the absence of the Void because it is non-dual. How can I talk about what has been established (to be true) by all the Vedāntas?'

Some maintain (that for the yogi, who is engaged in retaining his breath,) Ṃ is not uttered and (so too) Ḥ, for he repeats just the letter A alone. Vāmananātha, the author of the *Dvayasaṃpatti*, offers a different explanation, which is as follows:[243]

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[241] Read *parāmarśyasyāpi* for *parāmarśasyāpi*.

[242] This is drawn from the *Vairagyaśataka* by Bhartṛhari. The story goes that there once was a married king who had a lover. Once he received a magic fruit that was said to bestow eternal youth. He gave it to his lover. However, she too had a lover and gave the fruit to him. As it happened he was also the queens lover and so gave the fruit to her. In the end the queen gave it to the king and so the king suddenly realized her infidelity.

[243] The Sanskrit text of the *Dvayasampattivārttikam* by Vāmanadatta has been edited by R. Gnoli and published with an Italian translation in *Gururājamañjarikā*, Studi in onore di Giuseppe Tucci, Napoli, Istituto Universitario Orientale, 194, volume 2 pp. 451–445. Śivopādhyāya quotes verses 5 to 19ab here. This is a brief commentary (*vārtika*) in twenty-three verses on this and the following verse of the

'The plane of the ego (*ahaṃkāra*) is indeed superior to that of the intellect (*buddhi*). All this universe is pervaded by it and, once known, it is that alone which bestows liberation.

It is the supreme power who, undivided from the Supreme Lord, her nature is the consciousness. Again, She is the power of knowledge and it is she who is apparent in the form of Mantra.

AHAṂKĀRA is considered to be a Mantra and its nature is Śiva and Śakti.'[244]

This ego is the unlimited plane, that is, complete (and perfect) subjectivity (*pūrṇāhantā*). This is the meaning. (The *Dvayasaṃpatti* continues):

'That which here is the first letter called 'A' is Śiva, the Supreme Lord (*parameśvara*). And that which is *nāda* and *bindu* is this Śakti who is called 'Aiśvarī'. These two are said to be the seed in the moving and immobile (universe). (All) the letters, vowels and consonants are stamped by this. Thus, the yogis who meditate on the true nature of things call it the Śabdabrahman. (7cd-9)

Having meditated on the Unstruck Sound (the letter A (*asvara*)), which is without the vital breath (i.e. Ṁ and Ḥ), by means of the undifferentiated Speech of Vision, by the Yoga of awareness of pure consciousness alone, he is dissolved away into the supreme plane. (10) @Citation: The Siddhas have taught the same somewhere in the *Siddhāntasaṃgraha* (Compendium of the Teachings): 'a palm (*vitasti*)[245] above the navel and six fingers below the (base

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Vijñānabhairava. I have numbered the verses. The author, Vāmanadatta, should not be confused with the homonymous nondualist Kashmiri Vaiṣṇava who wrote the *Saṃvitprakāśa* (more correctly named *Viṣṇustuti*). He was the son of Rātridatta. This Vāmanadatta was not a Vaiṣṇava and was the son of Harṣadatta. He also wrote the *Subodhamañjarī*/ *Svabodhodayamañjarī*. Abhinavagupta refers to '*dvayasaṃpatti*' in TĀ 3/202cd-203ab. If this is a reference to this text, the author preceded him.

244 These are verses 5–7ab. The numbers of the verses of the passage that follows are recorded in the body of the text.

245 According to Monier-Williams' dictionary, a *vitasti* is a particular measure of length (defined either as a long span between the extended thumb and little finger, or as the distance between the wrist and the tip of the fingers, and said to equal 12 *aṅgulas* or about 9 inches.

of the) throat, in the place in between, is the heart. In the middle of the heart, there is said to be a lotus. In the middle of the lotus is a subtle calyx close to the crossing of three paths. (11–12)

There, located in the middle (of that), is the Self which bears the form of (all) the letters beginning with A. Within the letter A is the supreme (reality), the characteristic of which is the pulse of pure consciousness. Its observance (*upāsā*) is taught in the *Vijñānabhairava* (where it says) '... without *bindu* (Ṁ) or *visarga* (Ḥ) ... etc. (13–14abc)

The second energy, Aiśvarī, who has no foundation (in the domain of thought), is in the location of the Self. As the seed, She is Kuṇḍalinī, (the Snake) consisting of three and a half coils. This is the power of the vital breath in the body. Called the letter Ḥ, it resounds sufficiently (*alam*). Once the yogi has blocked the cavity of (his) ears, he perceives it clearly (within them). (15cd-17ab)

Between the eyebrows, Her form is *Bindu*. She is Śivā, the mother of the universe. She is perceived by yogis as always shining with her own radiant energy. The Moon and Sun of that Bindu are in the left and right eyes. Rendering them free of support, he should enter into the eternal Brahman.'[246] (17cd-19ab)

67) Meditation on the end of *visarga* with the mind free of support

वर्णस्य सविसर्गस्य विसर्गान्तं चितिं कुरु।
निराधारेण चित्तेन स्पृशेद्ब्रह्म सनातनम्॥ ९१ ॥

varṇasya savisargasya visargāntaṃ citiṃ kuru |
nirādhāreṇa cittena spṛśed brahma sanātanam || 91 ||

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[246] The rest of the text, not quoted by Śivopādhyāya, states:

'Listen well, O Goddess, to this traditional teaching. I am telling (it to you). When the eyes are well fixed, liberation is immediate. Having contracted the (opening) of the ears, so too, the lower doors (of the anus and the genitals), meditating on Unstruck Sound, enter the Cavity of Brahmā in a moment.' (VBh 113–114) (20–21)

This (is the teaching) that has come from the mouth of the Siddhas, and (the Lord) Himself has uttered. Those who have achieved complete accomplishment by means of this path attain the abode of the yoginīs. (22)

This is the work of the son of the one born in the country of the Jāka (> ḍāka?), a lion in the forest of Mīmāṃsā, Harṣadatta by name. (23)

Fix (the power of your) awareness (*citi*), with the mind (*citta*) free of (objective) support, (within or) on the end of *visarga* (Ḥ) of a phoneme with *visarga* (Ḥ) and make contact with the eternal Brahman. (91) (90)

Word-for-word meaning: *citiṃ kuru* fix (the power of your) awareness *cittena* with the mind *nirādhāreṇa* free of (objective) support *visargāntaṃ* (within or) on the end of *visarga varṇasya* of a phoneme *savisargasya* with *visarga spṛśed* and make contact with *brahma sanātanam* the eternal Brahman.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Again, here (in this meditation), having abandoned in the same way (the phoneme) 'A' of what is here AṂ and AḤ, *bindu* and *visarga* remain. As these cannot be pronounced (and so represent the inexplicable nature of Māyā) (*anirvacanīya*), the supreme cessation (of suffering) is attained there. (The meaning has thus) been established.

Śivopādhyāya

Visarga (emission)[247] is an attendant instrumental cause of the fettered state. It is the aggregate of the (phonemic) energies (called) Brāhmī and the rest that are the phonemes consisting of (the consonants) beginning with K that are associated with the essential nature of the many kinds of (cosmic) creation. The end of *visarga* (takes place) because (the mind is) **'free of support'**, that is, objectivity has waned away. That being so, because there is an excess of reflective awareness of one's own essential introverted nature, penetration (and absorption) within that (takes place). And as it is the attainment of a state of oneness (*tanmayībhāva*) **'fix (the power of your) awareness (*citi*)'**, that is, apply the intellect (to the end of *visarga*). Then, as sensory awareness (*saṃvedana*) is free (of objective) support, contact with the Supreme Brahman is perpetual. Moreover:

1)[248] The release (*viśleṣa*) of (that) emission itself (which impels the outpouring of these energies) is the seventeenth energy. 2) The eighteenth

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[247] *Visarga* is a short aspirate vowel at the end series of vowels in the normal alphabetical order. The word literally means 'emission'.

[248] Śivopādhyāya is quoting MVV 1/887cd-891ab, 893cd-895. The preceding three lines

(energy mentioned) in some places (in the scriptures) is that same (seventeenth energy that develops) due to (its) association with the (cosmogenic) arousal (*prakṣobha*) (of its energy).[249] 3) This, the excellent and supreme Kaulikī energy of Akula, whose form is the absolute (*anuttara*) (i.e., the phoneme A) and nature supreme Bhairava, is this emission (*visarga*) from which this universe is born. 4) The condition in which it is fit for arousal and 5) the emergence of (the beginning of) bringing about (its) arousal. 6) As the arousal is not complete, a lessening of the succession of the non-sequential (reality takes place). The swinging of emission (*visarga*) of the Self consisting of (this) set of six (has thus) arisen. As its nature is Anuttara, it is (all) the opening out of just the first (phoneme—A). And that (emission) itself is God (*bhagavat*) whose nature shines perpetually within and is endowed with the energy of the centre, which is full of the current of all the things within (him).'[250]

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help us to understand the context: 'Then, by attaining (the pure) consciousness of (Śiva's and one's own) essential nature, the basic state of Bindu (the fifteenth vowel, is established). Then, within (that consciousness of Bindu), whose form is filled with the entire aggregate (of energies), the empowered emission (*visarga*) (takes place) that is called 'ejection' (*vikṣepa*) (of the energies within Śiva into the outer domain).' MVV1/887cd-888. The phoneme called *visarga* (written Ḥ) is a semi-aspirate that is pronounced as an aspirate following the vowels that precede it. Thus, *iḥ* is pronounced *iha*, *uḥ* is *uha* and so on. The literal meaning of the word *visarga* is 'emission'. In early scriptural sources, its symbolic valence is hardly explored, whereas Abhinavagupta constantly returns to the theme of 'emission' and elaborates on it extensively. As the sixteenth vowel, it symbolizes the sixteenth digit of the Moon from which the other digits progressively emerge. These Abhinavagupta understands as phases in the rhythm of the perception of cognitive consciousness. He adds two more for good measure, the seventeenth, which is known to the scriptures but is not an astronomical entity and the eighteenth, which only Abhinavagupta mentions.

[249] Similarly, Abhinava says in his PTv that certain scriptures admit an eighteenth energy which, transcendent, represents the condition beyond all differentiation. See following notes.

At some places in the *Mata śāstra*, etc., there is assumed to be 18th *kalā* or phase in the state resting on *anuttara* or the transcendental by means of the *viśleṣa* or separation of *visarga*, i.e. by means of the second dot, viz. the half of *visarga* (:). So the phenomenon of the fifty phonemes or in other words, the entire universe is 'one' without succession. PTv p. 69 translation by Singh, 1988: 188.

[250] MVV 1/887cd-891ab, 893cd-895 translated in MBT intro. vol. 1 p. 349. See

Place the power of awareness (*citi*) into the essential nature of emission in the manner taught (here). If you read a locative here, the meaning is as follows.[251] All this expansion of the energies of the phonemes (*mātṛkā*) of Akula, (otherwise) called Śivabindu, is emission, the nature of which is Śakti. This is the meaning. For it is said that:

'Emission (*visarga*) is Kaulikīśakti, this emergence of the energies of the phonemes (*mātṛkā*) is born from that.'

And (so it is also said in the) *Jñānāmṛtarasāyana:*

'The supreme comes from the measure (*mātra*) of the half measure and half of that is the supreme beyond the supreme. The supreme reality transcends the reality principles (*tattva*). It is Non-being based on Being.'

Again:

'The pure Light (of consciousness, *prakāśamātra*,) present here when the three abodes (of subject, object and means of knowledge) manifest is referred to in the scripture as the 'Point' (*bindu*) and is considered to be the Point of Śiva (*śivabindu*).'[252]

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ibid.p. 346 ff for an extensive discussion. The following lines complete this passage: 'Beautiful with the Cosmic Bliss (*jagadānanda*) generated from (his own) essential nature (that he has) aroused by (his) own will, he shines perpetually, beautiful with the juice (*rasa*) (of the aesthetic savour) of complete emission. That is the (pulsing) union (*saṃghaṭṭa*) of Śiva and Śakti said to be (their) love (*sneha*).' MVV 1/894cd-895 The subject of *visarga* in general and especially as presented by Abhinavagupta deserves an extensive, full-length study.

[251] Śivopādhyāya has up to now understood *visargāntaṃ* to mean 'the end of *visarga*'. Now he offers another explanation which is in accord with Ānandabhaṭṭa and with which Swamijī also agrees. Two interpretations are possible because the word '*anta*' can mean both 'end' and within'. If we read a locative ending to the expression, that is, *visargānte*, the meaning is unambiguously 'within *visarga*'.

[252] TĀ 3/134 (133cd-134ab). This is the Supreme Point (*parabindu*) which is Śiva consciousness. See TĀ 3/110ab-116ab (110–116). With this statement, Abhinava concludes his exposition of the nature of the Point as the fundamental Light of consciousness, when it shines as the supreme subject that illumines the triad of subject, object and means of knowledge.

'The Supreme Abode—the Absolute (Anuttara)—is called Akula, whereas the emission (*visarga*) of the Lord is called Kaulikīśakti.'[253]

The phonemes beginning with A and ending with KṢ arise from that (*śakti*).

68) Meditation on the Self as unconfined space

व्योमाकारं स्वामात्मानं ध्यायेद्दिग्भिरनावृतम् ।
निराश्रया चितिः शक्तिः स्वरूपं दर्शयेत्तदा ॥ ९२ ॥

vyomākāraṃ svām ātmānaṃ dhyāyed digbhir anāvṛtam |
nirāśrayā citiḥ śaktiḥ svarūpaṃ darśayet tadā || 92 ||

One should meditate on one's own Self in the form of the sky, unconfined by the directions, then (the Goddess who is) the power of consciousness, free of (all) support, displays (her) own nature. (92) (91)

Word-for-word meaning: *dhyāyed* One should meditate on *svām* one's own *ātmānaṃ* Self *vyomākāraṃ* in the form of the sky *anāvṛtam* unconfined *digbhir* by the directions *tadā* then *citiḥ śaktiḥ* the power of consciousness *nirāśrayā* free of (all) support *darśayet* displays *svarūpaṃ* (her) own nature.

According to Swami Lakshmanjoo, 'here the word '*ātmānam*' means 'body', not 'the Self', which is the literal meaning. 'Your body is absolutely void, without the sensation of sides. There are no sides at all.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'I myself am the Supreme Gander (*haṃsa*), the Supreme Soul, superior to the supreme.' Having thus (reflecting on these teachings and) made **'one's own Self'** '**in the form of the sky**' and freed it of '**the directions**', that is, the limiting adjuncts (of outer objects) such as 'blue' and 'yellow', '**the power of consciousness,**' (thus,) '**free of (all) support,**' '**shows her own nature**'.

Śivopādhyāya

(One who is) '**unconfined by the directions**' pervades the universe. (He is) '**in the form of the sky**' (in the sense that he) has no form, not that (he is) hardly existent (*tuccha*).

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[253] TĀ 3/143cd-144ab (143).

69) Concentration on pain

किञ्चिदङ्गं विभिद्यादौ तीक्ष्णसूच्यादिना ततः ।
तत्रैव चेतनां युक्त्वा भैरवे निर्मला गतिः ॥ ९३ ॥

kiñcid aṅgaṃ vibhidyādau tīkṣṇasūcyādinā tataḥ |
tatraiva cetanāṃ yuktvā bhairave nirmalā gatiḥ || 93 ||

Having first pierced some limb (of the body) with a sharp needle or the like and then focused attention just there, (on the painful sensation, one attains) the pure state within Bhairava. (93) (92)

Word-for-word meaning: *vibhidyādau* Having first pierced *kiñcid* some *aṅgaṃ* limb (of the body) *tīkṣṇasūcyādinā* with a sharp needle or the like *tataḥ* then *yuktvā* focused *cetanāṃ* attention *tatraiva* just there, (on the painful sensation,) *nirmalā* (one attains) the pure *gatiḥ* state *bhairave* within Bhairava.

According to Swamijī, 'This is *śāmbhava* with slight touches of *āṇava*'. The former is the concentration on the pain, free of thought, and the latter, on the pricking of the body.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having 'churned' the body with '**a sharp needle or the like**' or fire, the power (required) to bear (the pain) etc., is itself said to be '**attention**' (*cetanā*). By recollecting the following statement of the *Bhagavadgīta* one attains a common nature with Bhairava.

'This (Self) cannot be cut, it cannot be burnt, made wet or dried out.'[254]

Śivopādhyāya

Having first of all pierced '**some limb**' be it a finger, a thumb or the like, with a sharp needle, thorn or the like and then, after that, '**focused attention**,' that is, applied awareness (*cetana*) '**just there (on the painful sensation),**' one who is attentive to the power of awareness (*cetanaśakti*) of the (perceiver who) experiences the pain of the needle and the like, possesses the pure knowledge that has as its object Bhairava.

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[254] BhGī 2.23

70) Meditation on No Mind

चित्ताद्यन्तःकृतिर्नास्ति ममान्तर्भावयेदिति ।
विकल्पानामभावेन विकल्पैरुज्झितो भवेत् ॥ ९४ ॥

cittādyantaḥkṛtir nāsti mamāntar bhāvayed iti |
vikalpānām abhāvena[255] *vikalpair ujjhito bhavet* || 94 ||

(The yogi) should reflect (*bhāvayet*) that "there is no inner (mental) organ within me, whether mind, (intellect or ego)." (Thus,) because there are no thoughts (also), (the yogi) is devoid of them. (94) (93)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhāvayed* (The yogi) should reflect *cittādyantaḥkṛtir nāsti* "there is no inner (mental) organ *mamāntar* within me whether mind, (intellect or ego)" *iti* thus, *vikalpānām abhāvena* because there are no thoughts (also), *vikalpair ujjhito bhavet* (the yogi) is devoid of thoughts.

Swamijī: This is *Śāktopāya.*

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'There is no inner (mental) organ within me', that is, although there is, there is not. Contemplation (*bhāvanā*) is firm in this way because outer objects cease. Thus, **'because there are no thoughts,'** (the yogi) is devoid and free of thoughts. Due to (his) condition, free of thought constructs, the consciousness (of the yogi) is pure.

Śivopādhyāya

(The yogi) should reflect that 'there is no inner (mental) organ within me, whether mind, (intellect or ego) within my body.' This is the (prose) connection (between the words). The qualities (*guṇa*) (of Nature) reside (and operate) within the qualities—what has (in actual fact) happened to me? (Nothing at all. I simply observe their transformations). In order to maintain a state of detachment within oneself, he says:

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[255] Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *bhāvayed yadi* for *bhāvayed iti* and *abhāve'pi* for *abhāvena.*

71) Discerning and detaching from Māyā and the Obscuring Coverings

माया विमोहिनी नाम कलायाः कलनं स्थितम् ।
इत्यादिधर्मं तत्त्वानां कलयन्न पृथग्भवेत् ॥ ९५ ॥

māyā vimohinī nāma kalāyāḥ kalanaṃ sthitam |
ityādidharmaṃ tattvānāṃ kalayan nā pṛthag bhavet || 95 ||

Māyā is deluding. The operation (*kalana*) of the Force (of limited agency) (*kalā*) (and the other *kañcukas*) goes on (functioning)—discerning (*kalayan*) this and the other properties of the reality principles (*tattva*) (with detachment), the individual soul (*nā*) is separated (from them). (95) (94)

Word-for-word meaning: *māyā* Māyā *vimohinī nāma* is deluding. *kalanaṃ* The operation *kalāyāḥ* of the Force (of limited agency and the other *kañcukas*) *sthitam* goes on (functioning) *kalayan* discerning *ityādidharmaṃ* this and other properties *tattvānāṃ* of the reality principles (with detachment), *nā* the individual soul *pṛthag bhavet* is separated (from them).

Swamijī agrees with the commentators: '*Kalayan* when you imagine and think that the functioning of Māyā is to put you in illusion, and the functioning of these five coverings (*kalāyāḥ*, five-fold covering) is also functioning in its own way—I have nothing to do with that; I have no concern with these six elements.... 'this is their own work; let them function in their own way, what have I to do? I have nothing to do with them;' ... So, he is liberated from Māyā' (and the other *kañcukas*). This is *Śāktopāya*.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Discerning in this way that 'this is Māyā which is deluding', 'this and the other properties of the metaphysical principles (*tattva*)' and 'the operation (*kalana*) of the Force (of limited agency) (*kalā*) (and the other *kañcukas*) goes on (functioning by itself),' the individual soul is separated (from them). He is said to be all-transcending and aloof.[256] This is the meaning.

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[256] The individual soul is enveloped by five *kañcukas* (literally 'cloaks') that are generated from Māyā. Originally in a state of deep sleep, these six forces (*kalā*) are added to it. From its basic state of delusion brought about by Māyā, proceeds, Kalā which is the force that endows the soul, the capacity for limited action

Śivopādhyāya

The deluding property of Māyā is that which deludes the individual soul by the particular which is the perception of relative distinctions. (Observing its function, one should think that this property) 'is not (inherently) mine' (i.e. 'I am not subject to Māyā'). The property of the Force (of limited agency) is the limited (capacity) to act. The property of the principle of Knowledge is limited apprehension. Reflecting (in this way), on the property of (each of the) metaphysical principles, the individual soul is not separate (from them), however, he does possess the knowledge of oneness which is the knowledge of discernment. The point is made (in this way) that liberation is attained by the knowledge which discerns between Nature and the individual soul.

Meditations on the Initial Emergence of Desire and Perception (96–98)

72) Quelling desire the moment it arises

झगितीच्छां समुत्पन्नामवलोक्य शमं नयेत् ।
यत एव समुद्भूता ततस्तत्रैव लीयते ॥ ९६ ॥

jhagitīcchāṃ samutpannām avalokya śamaṃ nayet |
yata eva samudbhūtā tatas tatraiva līyate || 96 ||

Having observed that a desire (has just) arisen, it should be put to rest immediately. Thus, it dissolves away there itself, from whence it has come forth. (96) (95)

Word-for-word meaning: *avalokya* Having observed that *icchāṃ* a desire (has) *samutpannām* just arisen *śamaṃ nayet* it should be put to rest *jhagiti* immediately. *tatas* Thus, *līyate* it dissolves away *tatraiva* there itself, *yata eva* from whence *samudbhūtā* it has come forth.

Swamijī 'This is *Śāmbhavopāya* because, at the very start of desire, you enter into the desireless, thought-less state of God consciousness.'

(*kiñcitkartṛtva*). This is followed by the limited power to know (*kiñcitjñātṛtva*), then Rāga—attachment, Kāla—time and the Niyati—constraint of natural law and karma. The practice here is to pay attention to them and how they function in order to become detached from them and freed from the limitations they impose on individual consciousness.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having reflected in this way inwardly, one who is (just beginning to be) disturbed, (the desire) of the mind that (has just) arisen, '**should be put to rest.**' Having entered into a state of oneness, 'like waves in the waters and bubbles in the sea' and brought all things to rest, the Brahman is then spontaneously realized.

Śivopādhyāya

'**Having observed,**' that is, reflected inwardly on a desire such as "may my wish for a son come true." Although pure consciousness is formless, having observed that a desire of this kind has arisen from it due to the disturbance of delusion (*māyā*), it should be quickly brought to rest. Pure consciousness is formless. Desire is made manifest within it by ignorance alone. Pure consciousness is formless and so possesses no desire. Rather, the object of desire or the desire (itself) and the like are just ignorance. Desire is quelled by seeing (that this is so). Desire arises solely due to ignorance and ignorance is (insubstantial like) the sky, and so, it dissolves away there (into consciousness) itself. The state free of thought is attained in this way. If it happens that it is not possible to pacify a desire, after the desire for a prior object, (another) subsequent thought arises that has that as its object of desire. If this happens, then the two objects of desire (that is, the prior and the subsequent) are brought to rest by the repeated practice of meditation (*dhāraṇā*) on the unfolding of consciousness (*unmeṣa*) in accord with the teaching:

'The expansion of consciousness that takes place when one is engaged in a single thought should be known to be the source from whence another arises. One should experience that for oneself.'[257]

Therefore, one should meditate on the expansion of consciousness (*unmeṣa*) experienced as pervading in between two thoughts that have two objects (of desire). By (doing) that, the other thought also merges into that same expansion of consciousness from which the first thought has emerged. Thus, both cease by the strength of the concentrated meditation (*dhāraṇa*)

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[257] SpKā 41 Śivopādhyāya quotes the same verse again at the end of the commentary on this verse.

on the subjectivity that unites the two thoughts into oneness. It is with (this) intended sense, (that it is taught here in the *Vijñānabhairava* itself):

'Cast not the mind into suffering nor into pleasure. Know, O Bhairavī! what (that) reality is, that remains in the middle (state between them).'

'Wherever the mind moves, having by that (very mind) at that (very) moment abandoned whatever (it moves to), (it has no fixed place and so, (left without support), one becomes free of (its) fluctuations).'[258]

This and more that will be taught further ahead. (Indeed) it is well said that, **'thus, it dissolves away there from whence it has come forth.'** As the venerable Vasugupta has said (in the *Stanzas on Vibration*):

'The expansion of consciousness that takes place when one is engaged in a single thought should be known to be the source from whence another arises. One should know that for oneself.'[259]

Discussion

To be at peace, the yogi should be free of the desire that causes him to cling to objectivity—to some particular place or thing—and hence agitate the mind that seeks to find ways to get what he wants and avoid what he does not. The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches a practice to remedy this craving. This essentially amounts to taking care to bring it to rest as soon as it arises. As Jayaratha says after quoting this meditation: 'Thus ultimately, on whatever path we travel, whether it be the common one of self-restraint or the less common one of those who are graced with an experience of the Lord's presence, it is essential to be free of attachment and desire in order to rise to the recognition of our own, free, omnipresent Śiva nature.'[260]

73) The authentic Self devoid of desire and perception

यदा ममेच्छा नोत्पन्ना ज्ञानं वा कस्तदास्मि वै ।
तत्त्वतोऽहं तथा भूतस्तल्लीनस्तन्मना भवेत् ॥ ९७ ॥

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[258] These two verses are VBh 103 and 129 (127), respectively.

[259] SpKā 41. Here is another verse from the *Stanzas* that is clearly inspired by the *Vijñānabhairava*.

[260] TĀ ad 4/121cd-122ab.

yadā mamecchā notpannā jñānaṃ vā kas tadāsmi vai |
tattvato'haṃ tathābhūtas tallīnas tanmanā bhavet || 97 ||

(Reflecting:) "When my will or knowledge have not arisen, who am I then?—Indeed, I am as I truly am!" being such (i.e. consciousness and bliss), merged in that, he becomes of that mind. (97)

Word-for-word meaning: *yadā* When *mamecchā* my will *jñānaṃ vā* or knowledge *notpannā* have not arisen *kas tadāsmi* who am I then? *vai* Indeed, *tattvato'haṃ* I am as I truly am *tathābhūtas* being such, *tallīnas* merged in that, *tanmanā bhavet* he becomes of that mind.

Swamijī: 'Although it seems that I am one with these three—I have got desire, I have got knowledge, and I have got limited soul—but you must imagine that the limited soul is not existing, and its desire and its cognition are not existing. In fact, my formation of consciousness is like that.' This is *Śāktopāya*

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Even when the flood of will, knowledge and action etc. has arisen (and so I experience that) "I act" or "I am moving" and the like or, due to that, perception (*jñāna*) has arisen also, (the yogi should recollect that) "in reality I am the (fundamental) nature (of them all) and when I have merged into that, I become of that nature." Such (is the teaching) of the masters. And that has been very clearly established in this way in the *Spanda* (teaching that declares):

'The streams of the pulsation (*spanda*) of the qualities, along with the other (principles), are grounded in the universal vibration (of consciousness) and so attain being; therefore, they can never obstruct the enlightened. Yet, for those whose intuition slumbers, (these pulsations of consciousness) are intent on disrupting their own abiding state of being (*svasthiti*), casting them down onto the terrible path of transmigration, which is so hard to cross.'[261]

Śivopādhyāya

Knowledge (here secondarily) indicates action (also). If will, knowledge and action do not arise, I myself do not exist. Rather, what does exist is conscious-

[261] SpKā 19–21

ness and bliss. This is the meaning. Consciousness, bliss, will, knowledge and action are, in actual fact, the powers of the Self in all states. But, on the contrary, this is not so for one whose nature is, at that very same time, consciousness and bliss in that way.

Discussion

As Ānandabhaṭṭa wants to do, he quotes the Spanda view that he perceives to be implicit in the teachings of the *Vijñānabhairava*. While the references are inspiring, they often, as in this case, teach a different practice. Here, he understands that the powers of will, knowledge and action are operating at the individual level as particular pulses (*viśeṣaspanda*) of the universal dynamism of consciousness (*sāmānyaspanda*). When they are perceived to be part of that universal activity, they no longer operate at the individual level. In other words, the will, knowledge and action of the individual soul is experienced as that of Śiva, the universal Self, which in this way, absorbs the individual into the universal. Śivopādhyāya refrains from projecting the metaphysics of dynamic stillness onto the perfect tranquillity of *vijñāna*. The common view is that the powers of consciousness and bliss operate within tranquil universal consciousness, whereas the other three operate in the domain of individual consciousness. When the energies of will, knowledge and action cease to operate in the domain of individual consciousness, thought constructs are no longer formed, and so the mind that is here identified with the individual soul also ceases to function and hence, exist. This explanation, that avoids the Spanda view, is certainly more in consonance with that of the *Vijñānabhairava* that clearly teaches that when their activity ends, the yogi attains his most authentic identity—the Bhairava nature, which is how he is as he 'truly is'. In the following meditation, we travel a step forward into the initial emergence of these energies and with that, of the intellect and the individual Self.

74) Meditation on the place of the emergence of desire and perception

इच्छायामथवा ज्ञाने जाते चित्तं निवेशयेत् ।
आत्मबुद्ध्यानन्यचेतास्ततस्तत्त्वार्थदर्शनम् ॥ ९८ ॥

icchāyām athavā jñāne jāte cittaṃ niveśayet |
ātmabuddhyānanyacetās tatas tattvārthadarśanam || 98 ||

(At the very instant) when a desire or perception has (just) arisen, (but is as yet without an object), one whose attention is not directed towards anything else, should place the mind (where it emerges, cultivating) the notion (*buddhi*) that (this is) the Self. (Thus, he) then (has) a vision of what truly exists (*tattvārtha*). (98) (97)

Word-for-word meaning: *icchāyām* (At the very instant) when a desire *athavā* or *jñāne* a perception *jāte* has (just) arisen, *ananyacetās* one whose attention is not directed towards anything else, *niveśayet* should place *cittaṃ* the mind *ātmabuddhyā* (where it emerges, cultivating) the notion (*buddhi*) that (this is) the Self *tatas* (Thus, he) then *tattvārthadarśanam* has a vision of what truly exists.

Swamijī: 'This is *Śāktopāya* with touches of *Śāmbhava*' (at the first start).[262]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

In all (such cases as) when desire or perception has just arisen, '**one whose attention is not directed towards anything else**' by virtue of (his) firm meditation (*bhāvanā*) on his own Self (has) a vision of the essential nature of reality (*tattvātma*). The sense is that by practicing this, (he attains the) realization (*niścaya*) that all this is indeed the Brahman.

Śivopādhyāya

When desire or perception has just arisen, having abandoned (all) intent on the objects of sense, (the yogi) should place (his) mind (there) with the idea (*buddhi*) that that itself is the Self. (Thus,) by means of that, (he attains) the knowledge of ultimate reality. For according to the Veda, 'this Self is the Brahman.' This meditation (*bhāvanā*) is with form, otherwise called 'with support.'

Perception (*jñāna*) in itself (*eva*) is momentary and is an ongoing flow (*santāna*). There is no perceiver at all (of any kind) which is its foundation. Agreeing with (this) Buddhist view, he teaches an Empowered Means.

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[262] Swamijī understands the previous practice to be in *Śāmbhavopāya* as the intellect has not emerged and so thought constructs are possible. This one, in which mind and thought begin to emerge, we enter into the domain of *Śāktopāya*.

Discussion

The previous meditation focused on the state prior to the emergence of mind and cogitation and so the yogi realised his inner authentic Bhairava nature. In this one he attends to the moment of emergence of the inner subjectivity to the outer universal objectivity at one with it.

75) Knowledge is without cause, baseless and deceptive—none possesses it

निर्मित्तं भवेज्ज्ञानं निराधारं भ्रमात्मकम् ।
तत्त्वतः कस्यचिन्नैतदेवंभावी शिवः प्रिये ॥ ९९ ॥

nirnimittaṃ bhavej jñānaṃ nirādhāraṃ bhramātmakam |
tattvataḥ kasyacin naitad evaṃbhāvī śivaḥ priye || 99 ||

(All) knowledge is without (outer, independent) cause, a baseless illusion. In reality, this (knowledge) does not belong to anybody. One who abides in this way (with this attitude), O dear one, is Śiva. (99) (98)

Word-for-word meaning: *jñānaṃ* (All) knowledge *bhavet* is *nirnimittaṃ* without (outer, independent) cause, *nirādhāraṃ* baseless *bhramātmakam* illusion. *tattvataḥ* In reality, *naitad* this (knowledge) *kasyacin* does not belong to anybody. *evaṃbhāvī* One who abides in this way (with this attitude), *priye* O dear one, *Śivaḥ* is Śiva.

Swamijī: Swami Lakshmanjoo explains (2002: p. 118–9): 'This objective cognition—*jñānam*—has no cause to arise. How does it arise? It is a wonder. This field of objective cognition is *nirādhāraṃ*, baseless. It has no support. Hence, it is *bhramātmakam* [deceptive]. You only feel the rise of this cognition, but the objective cognition which arises in you does not really arise at all. This field of objective cognition is arising in you, in the daily routine of your life, it arises in you always. But in fact, it does not arise at all, because it is *nirnimittam*, it has no cause to arise. How does it arise? It is supportless. If it is there, it is an illusion. The rise of cognition of the objective field is an illusion. It is an illusory perception. This perception is not a real perception, this is what he says in this process. In Vedānta, they call, not only objective consciousness illusion, but also subjective consciousness. That means they have ignored that 'I' consciousness, so this is a different school of thought. In fact, there is no objectivity, because there is no cause for it to arise. There is no support for this objectivity, except that you have projected this illusive 'I' consciousness on

this objective consciousness, from your birth to innumerable births. You have created this perception of objectivity. Objective perception is not at all established. 'I' thinks 'I' only. I-consciousness is to be taken in God consciousness and God consciousness will be diluted and merged in the universal 'I'. There you are at home.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(All knowledge is) 'without cause' because it is only an illusion. Like (the mistaken notion that) 'this is silver in the mother of pearl'. All that is perceptible is only an illusion and so is baseless, that is, without a foundation. Everything is pure consciousness alone because there is nothing else apart from consciousness. By the firmness of this kind of reflection, one becomes Śiva Himself. This is the overall sense (of this verse).

Śivopādhyāya

This perception of a jar and the like is without support because any permanent (*sthira*) Self or support of (the perception of) a jar and the like does not exist. Thus, it has no cause also because an instrumental cause, such as the sense of sight or light, is not a real entity. It is an illusion because it has arisen due to the influence of Māyā, as it is essentially (just) a thought construct. This is so because there is no other separate (entity apart) from the perception (of it). The sensation (*saṃvedana*) that 'that is this jar' is an illusion like 'that is this current of (the river) Vitastā'. This is the meaning. He, who is (constantly) engaged (in the practice) of contemplation in this way, is Śiva Himself.

Discussion

Jayaratha quotes this verse when explaining the sixth method that Abhinavagupta teaches of entering the Heart. There he says, '(He should enter the Heart) when he withdraws completely from it.' Jayaratha explains that this takes place when the yogi completely withdraws from the outer (world), pondering deeply (*bhāvanā*) that "this (outer) reality (*vastu*) has no being (of its own) at all."[263] Jayaratha then goes on to quote this meditation from the

[263] TĀ 5/71cd-72ab and Jayaratha's commentary.

Vijñānabhairava. In order to identify with Śiva, the yogi must abide in a deep awareness of the illusory, deceptive nature of every perception. Perceptions are not caused by what they perceive. There is perception of a jar, but there is no jar. As in a dream, it is baseless. Moreover, the yogi must realise profoundly, and maintain the awareness that just as in reality there is no object, so too there is no perceiver. The perceptions arise and fall away but they do not belong to anybody. It is referred to, in the introduction, for a discussion concerning the possible Buddhist origins of this and other meditations.

The next meditation sets the balance. This one leads to the contemplation of the absence of Self and the illusoriness of the world. The next one directs to the contemplation of the inner presence of consciousness in the body, that is, in the domain of subjectivity and within all phenomena, that is, in the domain of objectivity. So, we again accept the existence of the Self, having abandoned it by moving further inwards into the depths of consciousness, away from the surface fluctuations of the individual Self born of mind and its constructs.

76) The same consciousness nature is in all bodies and is everything

चिद्धर्मा सर्वदेहेषु विशेषो नास्ति कुत्रचित् ।
अतश्च तन्मयं सर्वं भावयन्भवजिज्जनः ॥ १०० ॥

ciddharmā[264] *sarvadeheṣu viśeṣo nāsti kutracit* |
ataś ca tanmayaṃ sarvaṃ bhāvayan bhavajij janaḥ || 100 ||

The one whose nature (*dharma*) is consciousness, is present in all bodies; there is no difference anywhere. Thus, a person engaged in contemplating (*bhāvayan*) everything as being of that nature conquers phenomenal existence. (100) (99)

Word-for-word meaning: *ciddharmā* The one whose nature is consciousness, *sarvadeheṣu* is present in all bodies; *viśeṣo nāsti kutracit* there is no difference anywhere. *ataś ca* Thus, *janaḥ* a person *bhāvayan* engaged in contemplating *sarvaṃ* everything *tanmayaṃ* as being of that nature *bhavajit* conquers phenomenal existence.

Swamijī: This is *Śāktopāya*.[265]

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[264] Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *ciddharmāḥ*—'those whose nature (*dharma*) is consciousness' for *ciddharmā*—'one whose nature (*dharma*) is consciousness'.

[265] Swamijī probably classifies this meditation as belonging to *Śāktopāya* because

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Those whose nature is consciousness are present universally in the bodies (*mūrti*) of the gods, demons, people, animals, immobile and moving (creatures) etc. There is no difference at all anywhere (in that consciousness). The difference is in (their bodies), not in (their) consciousness. Reflecting (*bhāvayan*) (in this way), that consciousness alone unfolds everywhere, by the firmness of (the direct) experience of that, reflecting that "I am He" (i.e. that universal Śiva consciousness), a man conquers (transitory) phenomenal being and goes beyond the world of transmigration that is very hard to traverse.

Śivopādhyāya

The one whose nature (*dharma*) is consciousness possess the consciousness which is cognition (*jñāna*) or action. Its 'nature' (*dharma*) is its (inherent) quality, that is, awareness (*cetana*). The affix *anic* (*an*) comes after the word *dharma* because it is alone (without any other word conjoined to it).[266] There is no difference at all (in the consciousness) beginning with that of a louse up to that of Sadāśiva 'present in all bodies' be it of an elephant or an ant. This is because consciousness is **'of that nature'**, that is, the same consciousness (in all living beings).

'The consciousness within the sun in the sky that adorns the expanse of the sky is the very same consciousness present in the belly of a worm within a cocoon in a hole in the ground.'[267]

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there is *bhāvanā*, which contains an element of imagination. The yogi must, at first, imagine that consciousness is present in all bodies. He cannot experience that directly, initially at least. He must first think this to be so. That thought is refined through practice and reaches ever closer to the pure thought-free consciousness that is ultimately experienced directly as being in all bodies.

[266] 'The affix *anic* (*an*) comes after the word *dharma*, when it is the last member of an ascriptive (*bahuvrīhi*) compound, and is itself the only word without any other word conjoined to it or when the first member is a single word. It then becomes *dharmā*. Pā 5/4/124–6 The same suffix is applied to *nāma* so that we get *nāmā*.

[267] *Yogavāsiṣṭa* 1/61/18. This verse is also quoted by Jayaratha in TĀv ad 6/62cd. There and in the printed edition of the *Yogavāsiṣṭa*, the second line is the same as here. Here, the second half of the quarter reads, as it does in the *Yogavāsiṣṭa*: *vyomni*

'**Contemplating**' that the Brahman is (the same) without difference anywhere. Meditating on this realization is not (the same as just) sitting and eating etc. with outcastes.[268]

'If one, who has realized the non-duality of consciousness and its (deeper) reality, were to be free to behave as he wishes, then what difference would there be between dogs and those who perceive the true nature (of things) with regards to eating what is impure?'[269]

Discussion

Swamijī categorizes this meditation as *Śāktopāya* as it implies the presence of the Self, which is necessarily accompanied by the mental representation of it. This is so even though this meditation is directed only at consciousness, which is essentially non-conceptual and so one would expect it to be in *Śāmbhavopāya*.

Kṣemarāja quotes this meditation in his commentary on the first *Śivasūtra*, that is, 'consciousness is the Self' (*caitanyam ātmā*).[270] Clearly, by quoting this meditation from the *Vijñānabhairava*, Kṣemarāja is establishing a distinction between the perceiver who is as deceptive and baseless as are his perceptions,

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bhāskare for *bhāti bhāsvati*. In the first line, the *Yogavāsiṣṭa* reads *bhuvanābhoge bhūṣaṇe* for *gaganābhogabhūṣaṇe* in TĀv ad 6/62cd. Thus, the meaning there is '(the consciousness that is) in the expanse of the world and within the sun that adorns the sky (is the very same consciousness present in the belly of a worm within a cocoon in a hole in the ground.)'

[268] *svaśvapāka*– literally 'those who cook their own dogs'. The point Śivopādhyāya is making here is that we should think that what is meant here is simply that there is no difference in status in the essential core of the individuals, whether their caste or social status is high or low. The consciousness each person has is the same universal consciousness everybody possesses.

[269] This verse is quoted twice in the commentary on the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* ad 1/118/19 and 2/38/44. In both instances, it appears at the end of the commentary. It was probably part of the text and included into the commentary by mistake. In the printed edition, the first quarter reads differently in both cases. There we read *viditabrahmatattvasya* for *buddhādvaitasatattvasya* i.e. 'one who has realized the Brahman' for 'one who has realized the non-duality of consciousness.'

[270] Kṣemarāja believed that the three sections of the *Śivasūtra* corresponded to the three categories of means. Thus, his citation of this meditation here clearly implies that it is in *Śāmbhavopāya*.

from the Self that is absolute and eternal universal consciousness that is the fundamental nature of Deity. While the reality of the individual perceiver and his object of perception are illusory and deceptive, this is not so with the Self. The meditation itself declares that by realizing that the yogi realises his true identity to be Śiva, who is the one universal perceiver and the agent of all action. As the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches, everybody, even the most uneducated and uncultured, intuit Śiva's existence (VBh 124 (122)). As Kṣemarāja says in his commentary on this *sūtra*:

'The nature of the Self is consciousness. Established (*siddha*) as being both knowledge and action, (in reality) it is (always) unobscured, so who can deny its Śiva-nature?'

Kṣemarāja is supported by Utpaladeva who, declaring the same right at the beginning of the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā*, implies that although his treatise is highly sophisticated and deeply philosophical, in reality there is no need to go into such profound discussion. As the self-evident Self of all, Lord Śiva is known right from the start. Accordingly, he writes:

'Who can prove or disprove the existence of Maheśvara—the Great Lord—whose existence is proved from the very start (of any discussion) (*ādisiddha*)?'[271]

77) Quelling negative emotions and states of mind the moment they arise

कामक्रोधलोभमोहमदमात्सर्यगोचरे ।
बुद्धिं निस्तिमितां कृत्वा तत्तत्त्वमवशिष्यते ॥ १०१ ॥

kāmakrodhalobhamohamadamātsaryagocare |
buddhiṃ nistimitāṃ kṛtvā tat tattvam avaśiṣyate || 101 ||

Having halted (the agitation of) the mind (*buddhi*) when (sexual) desire, anger, greed, delusion, madness, and envy (are about to arise), what remains is that (one, supreme) reality (of consciousness that underlies it). (101) (100)

Word-for-word meaning: *buddhiṃ nistimitāṃ kṛtvā* Having halted (the agitation of) the mind *kāmakrodhalobhamohamadamātsaryagocare* when (sexual) desire, anger, greed, delusion, madness, and envy (are about to arise), *avaśiṣyate* what remains is *tat* that *tattvam* (one, supreme) reality.

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[271] ĪP 1/1/2.

Swamijī: 'Your mind must remain in an unagitated state (during) the *rise* of excitement, not *in* excitement. When the excitement is (about) to rise, at the point of rising. When *krodha* (anger) is just (about) to start, (when) the fire of *krodha* (anger) is (about) to rise. When it has risen, then he is lost and he cannot control his mind, he cannot control his intellect, he cannot control his ego. He is finished. He has ruined his, all the states of these, internal organs' ... 'saints are broad-minded just like the ocean. Big tides do not agitate them.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having made the intellect one-pointed, that is, inactive (*nispanda*) because it is not agitated when (sexual) desire, anger and the rest, including envy (arise), what remains is that (one, supreme) reality, which is the awakened consciousness of (pure) consciousness alone.

Śivopādhyāya

Having made one's own '**intellect**', that is, cognitive consciousness, one-pointed in the stated manner, when the '**domain**', that is, the abode of the six enemies (that is, lust and the rest) is in the process of descending (and forming in one's mind), 'what remains is that (one, supreme) reality (of consciousness that underlies it)'. Another explanation (*vṛtti*) is that, by the excellence of (that) concentration on desire and the rest, attachment to outer objects is removed and becomes consciousness and bliss itself. This is the Śāmbhava state, the means to which is consciousness free of thought constructs.

78) Meditating on the universe as a magic show or a moving picture

इन्द्रजालमयं विश्वं व्यस्तं वा चित्रकर्मवत् ।
भ्रमद्वा ध्यायतः सर्वं पश्यतश्च सुखोद्गमः ॥ १०२ ॥

indrajālamayaṃ viśvaṃ nyastaṃ vā citrakarmavat |
bhramad vā[272] *dhyāyataḥ sarvaṃ paśyataś ca sukhodgamaḥ* || 102 ||

Contemplating the universe as a magic show, or as projected (*nyasta*) (onto a canvas) like (painting) a picture, or in (constant) motion: viewing everything (in this way, one experiences) the emergence of bliss.[273] (102) (101)

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[272] Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *bhramato* for *bhramad vā*.

[273] From the point of view of the exegetical tradition that developed from the

Word-for-word meaning: *dhyāyataḥ* Contemplating *viśvaṃ* the universe *indrajālamayaṃ* as a magic show, *nyastaṃ vā* or as projected (onto a canvas) *citrakarmavat* like (painting) a picture, *vā bhramad* or in (constant) motion: *paśyataś* viewing *sarvaṃ* everything (in this way, one experiences) *sukhodgamaḥ* the emergence of bliss.

Swamijī: "We are expanded; we are not differentiated. This is only the expansion of one's own Self; this is not differentiatedness of one's own Self.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having realized that all this universe is like a magic show by means of the intellect that, endowed with insight and experience, has determined (that it is so), viewing and so too meditating, that all this is in (constant) motion by ascending into the pulse of his own (innate consciousness), he becomes eternally blissful. The meaning is that, perceiving that all this is the Brahman, he is liberated

Śivopādhyāya

'The universe' is the universe consisting of objects and perceivers. (Viewing things) **'in (constant) motion'** is like the movement of trees and mountains for one who is sitting in a boat (as well as the transitions through the phases of life) from birth onwards.

Discussion

Here, Ānandabhaṭṭa sees the polarity as one between the illusory world and the dynamic pulse of consciousness. A little reflection would have made him realize that this polarity is not a possible one, unless we concede that the inner pulse results in the manifestation of an illusory world, which would not make sense. The primary polarity, according to the *Vijñānabhairava*, is between the domain of illusory thought (*vikalpa*) and Deity consciousness

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Śivasūtras onwards, this need not be an ontological statement. The world deludes us. But that does not mean it's unreal. We perceive duality and difference by mistake. In actual fact, the universe is an expansion of the powers of consciousness. It is not an illusion as the *Vijñānabhairava* maintains.

free of thought constructs (*nirvikalpa*). The former emerges out of the latter through the development of the mental and cognitive apparatus, accompanied by the sense of Self. This is instigated by an impulse in the depth of *nirvikalpa* consciousness. When that ceases, it retreats back into it along with the sense of its individual existence and merges into the inner identity of Deity.

79) The centre between pleasure and pain

न चित्तं निक्षिपेद्दुःखे न सुखे वा परिक्षिपेत् ।
भैरवि ज्ञायतां मध्ये किं तत्त्वमवशिष्यते ॥ १०३ ॥

na cittaṃ nikṣiped duḥkhe na sukhe vā parikṣipet |
bhairavi jñāyatāṃ[274] *madhye kiṃ tattvam avaśiṣyate* || 103 ||

Cast not the mind into suffering nor into pleasure. Know, O Bhairavī! what (that) reality is that remains in the middle (state between them). (103)

Word-for-word meaning: *nikṣiped* Cast *na* not *cittaṃ* the mind *du,hkhe* into suffering *na vā* nor *parikṣipet* cast it *sukhe* into pleasure. *jñāyatāṃ* Know, *bhairavi* O Bhairavī *kiṃ* what *tattvam* reality *avaśiṣyate* remains *madhye* in the centre.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Everything in the domain of pleasure, pain and the like, be it pleasure or suffering, is just a sensation. Having known everything (in this way), meditate (on it), O Bhairavī, by means of that concentration. In the centre between those (two), Bhairava arises.

Śivopādhyāya

One should not place the mind in the field of pleasure and pain (in such a way that one experiences) "I am happy" (or) "I am sad." One should not persist in projecting the qualities of the inner (mental) organ into one's own pure Self. Rather, you should know, that is, reflect for yourself, 'what (that) reality is that remains in the middle (state between them).' The reality that is in between

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274 Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *dhyāyatāṃ* for *jñāyatāṃ*.

pleasure and pain, which is (their) witness, that is, reflects (and connects them together), is the one reality which is consciousness. The meaning is that one should reflect on that with a one-pointed mind.

Now he teaches (the realization of) pervasion of consciousness and bliss by laying hold of the full subjectivity (of Śiva consciousness) and destroying the subjectivity (associated with) the body etc.

Discussion

According to Swamijī, this meditation is in *Śāktopāya*. Polarities are always in the domain of thought and conceptualization, that identifies and oscillates between them. Searching for the centre, thought is refined and purified of objectivity and the subjectivity associated with it, tending increasingly towards consciousness until it is brought to a halt in the stability of the centre where the supreme subjectivity of the Deity shines, free of the extremes of the limited perceptions of the lower subjectivity of embodied individual consciousness.

80) Abandoning embodied subjectivity to become omnipresent

विहाय निजदेहास्थां सर्वत्रास्मीति भावयन् ।
दृढेन मनसा दृष्ट्या नान्येक्षिण्या सुखी भवेत् ॥ १०४ ॥

vihāya nijadehāsthāṃ sarvatrāsmīti bhāvayan[275] |
dṛḍhena manasā dṛṣṭyā nānyekṣiṇyā sukhī bhavet || 104 ||

After abandoning (all) regard (*āsthā*)[276] for his own body, reflecting (*bhāvayan*) that "I am everywhere" with a firm mind and undistracted vision, (the yogi) is blissful. (104)

Word-for-word meaning: *vihāya* After abandoning *nijadehāsthāṃ* (all) regard for his own body, *bhāvayan* reflecting that *sarvatrāsmīti* "I am everywhere" *dṛḍhena* with a firm *manasā* mind *nānyekṣiṇyā* (and) undistracted *dṛṣṭyā* vision, *sukhī bhavet* (the yogi) is blissful.

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[275] Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *bhāvayet* for *bhāvayan*.

[276] According to Swamijī, *āsthām* means 'I-consciousness of your own body.' Similarly, according to both commentators, *āsthā* (lit. 'regard' or 'attachment') means subjectivity (*pramātṛtā*). My translation is literal.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having abandoned the subjectivity of one's own body, (reflecting) for example, that "I am not the body," then, after that, (one experiences that) "all this is me alone." Reflecting in this way, he is happy everywhere and at all times.

Śivopādhyāya

After abandoning (all) regard for his own body, that is, the subjectivity in the body (he experiences that) "I am all (things)" as does Sadāśiva and Īśvara, that[277] is (his) consciousness nature ******,[278] that is like Śiva, whose nature is the pure consciousness taught previously. **'With a firm mind,'** that is, without doubts and so too, (a firm) undistracted vision, that is, cognitive consciousness, **'one is blissful'.**

Many have explained that here within the universal 'I'ness, which is the oneness of Śiva and Śakti (is true bliss). This kind of 'I'ness has been denied by the author of the *Tattvammañjarī*, who delights in the joy of Buddhist teachings and corroborated by him (with reasoned argument where he says):

'There is fear of something if I (were to be) something. Thus, if I myself am nothing, then whose fear arises?'

As the Buddhists also say:

'If there is a Self, the denotation (of another person as someone) else (is possible. This is) when there is a division between, 'self' and 'other', attachment and aversion. All defects arise bound to these two.'

(It is said) in the *Vimarśadīpikā*:

'Immanent (as all things) and transcendent (beyond all things), the divine phoneme—AHAṂ ('I') is free. Once one has entered (this) most excellent reality, who fears (anything)?'

This is agreed. It is also (said) by a preceding teacher:

'The person who, within creation, (thinks) "I am alone" is tired out by the emotion (*rasa*) of (alternating) fright and audacity. (The person who thinks)

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[277] Read *sat tu* for *na tu*.

[278] There is a gap in the text here.

"I am one, who is there other than me?" (Realizes that) "In this way, I abide free from fear."

In such ways, the Lord is contemplated in every book (of our tradition) as the (supreme) ego (*ahaṃrūpa*). The venerable Hrasvanātha, the son of Harṣadatta, has also (written) in the *Dvayasampatti*: 'The plane of the ego (*ahaṃkāra*) ...'[279] Limited (conditioned) egoity should be abandoned. That is what Tapasvirāja has (also) said:

'The demon of ego (*aham*) who craves the blood (that flows) when the mental stability of people has been torn asunder by the very jagged (and sharp) fangs of egoity is reduced to the condition of a slave just by recollecting You.'

Discussion

Śivopādhyāya, seeing that the sense of identity with the body cannot be abandoned without a clear understanding of one's own personal identity, launches into a discussion about it. He highlights, on the one side, the Buddhist view that the belief in an independently existing Self is the very essence of ignorance and, as such, the root cause of all suffering. At the other extreme is the belief taught in 'our books' that the sense of Self is an absolute ego. In between is the more common view that the ego of false pride and mistaken identification is so supremely painful that it must be abandoned by the Lord's grace.

81) Rising from the perception of the particular to the omnipresent

घटादौ यच्च विज्ञानमिच्छाद्यं वा ममान्तरे ।
नैव सर्वगतं जातं भावयन्निति सर्वगः ॥ १०५ ॥

ghaṭādau yac ca vijñānam icchādyaṃ vā mamāntare |
naiva sarvagataṃ jātaṃ bhāvayan iti sarvagaḥ || 105 ||

"The perception present when (perceiving an outer object), such as a jar or the desire and the like within me, does not itself (exist. Realizing this, consciousness) has become omnipresent." Meditating (*bhāvayan*) in this way, (the yogi becomes) omnipresent.[280] (105) (104)

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[279] For the full passage see above commentary on VBh 90.

[280] This translation agrees with Ānadabhaṭṭa's and Swamijī's explanation and the first

Word-for-word meaning: *yac ca vijñānam* "The perception present *ghaṭādau* (when perceiving an outer object), such as a jar *vā* or *icchādyaṃ* the desire and the like *mamāntare* within me, *naiva* do not itself (exist). (Realizing this, my consciousness) *sarvagataṃ jātaṃ* has become omnipresent." *bhāvayan* Meditating *iti* in this way, (the yogi becomes) *sarvagaḥ* omnipresent.

Swamijī: 'The actual existence of this object is there (in the object), and this using of the object, or misusing of this object, or perceiving of this object, is in my consciousness. In fact, this object is not existing at all, and this desire for this object, or using of this object for some purpose, is not existing in me at all. Then where is it? This consciousness is everywhere, *sarvagataṃ jātam*. This consciousness of the objective world and this consciousness of the subjective world is not only in these two things; it is everywhere.... This bottle is everywhere, and this desire is also everywhere. Only this is a trick of that magician that it has (been) put in only two places. The re-placement of these, from individuality to universality, is to be done by the *sādhaka*. We have to re-place it in its real way; I mean in our consciousness. In our consciousness, we have to re-place this object in each and every object.... Actually, individual consciousness is universal consciousness, and one object is universal object.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(Consciousness) is what is always perceived everywhere and in all states by the perception of (an outer object), such as "this is a jar". (This is also true of) the desire within myself[281] in such a way that, for example, (I experience that) "I am acting." Although all that has taken place (*jātam*), does not exist, for it has no essence (of its own)." Meditating everywhere (in this way, the yogi's) nature becomes the Light (of consciousness). This is the sense (of this verse).

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of the two presented by Śivopādhyāya, who also understands this verse as follows, perhaps more correctly:

ghaṭādau yac ca vijñānam icchādyaṃ vā mamāntare (*mamaivāntare*) |
naiva (> *na*) *sarvagataṃ jātaṃ bhāvayan iti sarvagaḥ* ||

"The perception present when (perceiving an outer object), such as a jar or the desire and the like, is not within me alone, it has become omnipresent." Meditating (*bhāvayan*) in this way, (the yogi) becomes omnipresent. (105) (104)

[281] Read *mamāntare* for *tadantare*.

Śivopādhyāya

Others (say that) all the perception (*vijñāna*) that arises is observed everywhere (in all cases in the course of perceiving an outer object), such as a jar and so too the desire and the like within me do not exist. Meditating on it in this way, as Void, (consciousness of the yogi) becomes omnipresent.[282]

Our discernment is as (follows). The perception (that takes place in the presence) of an (outer) object, or the desire and the like, that is the perception of the perceiver of whom, that is, the object is not within me alone, that is, in the middle of (my) heart, rather '**it has become omnipresent**' (*sarvagataṃ jātaṃ*). This is the prose order.

The word '**itself**' is out of order. Rather, one should understand that it comes after (the word) '**mine**' (i.e., 'mine itself', that is 'mine alone').[283] The perception which has as its object all such (outer things) as jars or else the desire and the like (within me) are (just) mine (alone). So, what does that entail? (It entails that) jars and the like are also known by means of my perception. In the same way, (every perceiver) beginning with Sadāśiva, right up to a louse, knows or desires by being my own nature (that is, consciousness).[284] Even an insect

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[282] This understanding of the verse agrees with Ānandabhaṭṭa and Swamijī. Notice how Ānandabhaṭṭa regularly takes the opportunity to state that, according to the *Vijñānabhairava*, the phenomenal world, its perception and the perceiver are not ultimately real. Śivopādhyāya agrees to some extent with this view, it is after all implicit in a number of meditations taught in the *Vijñānabhairava*. However, he generally concludes that, when by cultivating insight into their illusory nature, we ultimately discover that they are real, not as independently existing things in themselves, but as manifestations of consciousness that, by its inscrutable power, becomes them. Here is a good example of how Śivopādhyāya first presents and accepts what must have been the general as voiced by Ānandabhaṭṭa and then goes on to present another holistic view, inspired by Somānanda, that safeguards the reality of the world.

[283] Śivopādhyāya is saying that we should read this verse as follows:

ghaṭādau yac ca vijñānam icchādyaṃ vā mamāntare (> *mamaivāntare*) |
naiva (> *na*) *sarvagataṃ jātaṃ bhāvayan iti sarvagaḥ* || 105 ||

"The perception present when (perceiving an outer object), such as a jar or the desire and the like, is not within me itself (alone), it has become omnipresent." Meditating (*bhāvayan*) in this way, (the yogi) becomes omnipresent. (105) (104)

[284] 'My own nature' is the essential ground of all perception and hence the experience

knows and desires (every perceiver), beginning with the likes of me up to Sadāśiva. Thus, the nature of everything is knowledge and action and is all things. Meditating in this way, that is, practicing (this) *dhāraṇā*, (the yogi) becomes omnipresent.

As the venerable Somānanda has said in the *Śivadṛṣṭi*:

'The jar knows me as my own nature and I know (myself) as being the jar's own nature. I know (myself) as Sadāśiva by nature and he knows (himself) as being my nature. Śiva Himself abides, (thus,) knowing Himself as the many (diverse) existing things.'[285]

Discussion

We have examined in several perspectives in the introduction and elsewhere, the fundamental principle that renders all meditation effective is that everything is immersed in consciousness. The objects of perception are an integral part of their perception. The yogi pays close attention to this oneness between objects and the perception of them, thereby immersing them in consciousness. Once entered into consciousness through that portal, every single thing

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and, in that sense, existence of all things. Every living cognizing being can be such because it is grounded in its own essential conscious nature that it experiences as 'my own nature'.

[285] ŚDṛ 5/105cd-106ab, 109ab. The whole passage reads:

'Or else, all things, being of the nature of all things, are omniscient. All existing things know themselves and are present in every way. The jar knows me as my own nature and I know (myself) as being the jar's own nature. I know (myself) as Sadāśiva by nature and he knows (himself) as being my nature. Yajñadatta (knows himself) as Śiva by nature and Śiva as Yajñadatta by nature. The jar knows (itself in the highest state of consciousness) as Sadāśiva and he (knows himself) as the jar.

All existing things are everything as everything is everything. Everything belongs to everything here as forms of that which is the many (diverse) existing things. The jar possesses my nature and I possess the jar's nature. Śiva Himself abides, (thus,) knowing Himself as the many (diverse) existing things. Thus, as the (universal) equality (*sāmya*) of everything abides in this way in all existing things, everything is described as being Śiva's nature (*rūpa*) which is present everywhere.' ŚDṛ 5/105ab-111ab (5/104cd-110)

is the consciousness that is every single thing, be it subject or object. Shifting the attention from the object and its perception to that of the subject and its object, Bhairava teaches that it is the foundation of all the meditations.

82) Attending to the relationship between subject and object

ग्राह्यग्राहकसंवित्तिः सामान्या सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
योगिनां तु विशेषोऽस्ति संबन्धे सावधानता ॥ १०६ ॥

grāhyagrāhakasaṃvittiḥ sāmānyā sarvadehinām |
yogināṃ tu viśeṣo'sti saṃbandhe sāvadhānatā || 106 ||

The perception of subject and object is common to all embodied beings. What distinguishes yogis (from the others is that they pay careful) attention to (their) relationship.[286] (106) (105)

Word-for-word meaning: *grāhyagrāhakasaṃvittiḥ* The perception of subject and object; *sāmānyā* is common *sarvadehinām* to all embodied beings. *viśeṣo'sti* What distinguishes *yogināṃ tu* yogis (from the others is that they pay) *sāvadhānatā* careful attention *saṃbandhe* to (their) relationship.

Swamijī maintains that this is not a *dhāraṇā*, just simply a description. Yogis, unlike those who are not, pay attention to the relationship—*saṃbandha*—between subject and object, Swamijī understands the word '*saṃbandha*' differently. According to him, it means 'contact.' 'The contact of

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[286] TĀ 10/204 is a paraphrase of VB 106 (105), quoted by Jayaratha in full. It is also cited in MM p. 154 and in ŚSūvi on *sūtra* 1/18. A variant of the first line is quoted in TĀv ad 4/212. In Śivopādhyāya's version of this verse, we find the reading *viśeṣo 'sti* for *viśeṣo 'ya*, found here and in Ānandabhaṭṭa's version. The latter reading is also found in the citation of this verse in the MM p. 154 and in the ŚSūvi on *sūtra* 1/18. A variant of the first line is quoted above in TĀv ad 4/212. The expression '*grāhyagrāhaka*' may be taken to be a copulative compound—'the object and the subject', or as an attributive one—'the subject (i.e. perceiver of) the object'. It is found commonly in both senses in the text of the *Tantrāloka* and even more so in Jayaratha's commentary. Indeed, the relationship between subject and object is a major object of attention here! Those who fail to attend to it carefully are lost in the world of objectivity, deprived of all but a trace of their essential subjectivity.

objectivity and subjectivity in yogis is divine. They remain fully aware in each and every act of this daily routine of life.... When you see your wife, you are excited. When you see your enemy, you are not excited ... This *saṃbandha*, this contact with objectivity and subjectivity, is inferior.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The behaviour of all embodied beings, ranging from Sadāśiva down to a louse, (which is experienced as) 'this is an object of perception and that the perceiver' is common to all embodied beings. As one knows, so too does someone else. In this way, (all perception is) common (and basically the same for all of them). However, the difference with yogis is this—they do not forget the nature of the (fundamental) perceiver when observing the essential nature of the object and (its) perceiver. This is the meaning. "I am the one who recollects and so (my) nature is the Light (of consciousness) at all times. What is other than that, is the object of perception, which is said to be impermanent and (ultimately) unreal."

Śivopādhyāya

(The perception of subject and object) is '**common**' and without difference for '**all embodied beings**' ranging from Sadāśiva up to a louse, whereas Yogis '**(pay careful) attention**,' that is, do not forget the nature of the perceiver.

Discussion

Abhinavagupta refers to this verse to sum up an analysis of sixteen phases of the act of perception in TĀ10/186cd-227, ranging in groups from the perceiver out to the object. The interested reader is referred to my translation of the *Tantrāloka* for a detailed exposition. In the following passage, Abhinavagupta presents the initial and final phases as those emergent in the perceiver and concluding in the object, one with the subject and independent of him:

'There, the first (of these moments) is that of supreme non-duality, which is the undivided aesthetic delight (*rasa*) (of consciousness), while the second is perceived to be the outpouring of the subject. The last (moment) is at one with the object of knowledge, and so assumes the condition of (its) innate

nature (*svarūpa*). The penultimate (moment), which is that of the experiencing subject (in its fully evident state), cannot be discerned separately.'[287]

In practice, the detailed analysis and experience of each phase is not essential. What matters is attention to the polarities between which they move. Accordingly, Abhinavagupta instructs:

'This is the attention, that is said in various places (in the scriptures), one must pay to the relationship between the perception of the object and the perceiver, for (this attention is the veritable) wish-granting cow who fulfils every desire.'[288]

Jayaratha quotes this verse from the *Vijñānabhairava* as an example of one of the 'various places' in scripture where this is taught. There can be little doubt that it is to this verse that Abhinavagupta is referring. Indeed, Jayaratha's commentary is essentially on this verse. He writes:

'Those who are firmly rooted in the plane of Māyā find rest (even) in the presence of the disturbance (engendered by the interaction between) subject and object (by recollecting that) "This is the object and that is the subject." Again, those who are established on the plane of consciousness beyond thought should pay attention, even when that disturbance occurs, to (the place) from which the emergence (*udaya*) of subject and object (as distinct polarities occurs), or to where they come to rest, so that all the fruits one may desire are attained.'

Abhinava tells us that he learnt this analysis of the phases of perception from his Trika teacher Śambhunātha, saying 'I have revealed this categorization (*bheda*) (of the phases of perception) based on the vital breath under the custody of *Khecarīcakra* in this way at the divine command of the venerable Śāmbhunātha.'[289] Can it be that this teaching was imparted in the course of Śāmbhunātha's explanation of this *dhāraṇā* to him? Perhaps not. Abhinava refers to this *dhāraṇā* in his *Mālinīvijayavārtika*, without mentioning any teacher.

Kṣemarāja quotes VBh 106 in his *Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya* (the Heart of Recognition) just after defining the Pleasing Means—*sukhopāya*—concerning which

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[287] TĀ 10/188cd-190ab.

[288] TĀ 10/204.

[289] TĀ 10/226cd-227ab

he says that 'penetration into the subject made of reflective awareness is the cause of complete knowledge, which is the means to that (consciousness).'[290]

The Pleasing or Easy Means is the cultivation of attention to oneself as the perceiver engaged in the perception of an object. This requires shifting the focus of attention away from the object of perception, along with a strengthened sense of self-awareness. This is achieved by focusing on the relationship between subject and object in such a way as to be always mindful of the supreme perceiver (*parapramātṛ*), the metaphysical subject without which there can be no object. Towards the end of the *Heart of Recognition*, commenting on the eighteenth aphorism, Kṣemarāja quotes this verse again and supplies more details of this practice. By placing this verse at the beginning and end of his *Heart of Recognition* it 'encapsulates' the entire teaching. In other words, the 'heart' or 'essence' of the teaching by which one receives the grace of the recognition of one's own Śiva nature is contained in the practice of attention to the relationship between subject and object. Kṣemarāja writes:

'There is an easy means by which one can shatter all the fetters of rigorous (yogic) disciplines ... The aspirant keeps his mind (*citta*) concentrated on (the consciousness which is) the Heart, restraining, in the stated manner, the thoughts (*vikalpa*) that prevent his abiding in his own true nature by not thinking of anything at all, and so lays hold of the state free of thought (*avikalpa*). (With practice), he becomes used to regarding his consciousness (*cit*) as the real perceiver, untarnished by the body etc., and so within a short time, he achieves absorption in the unfolding Fourth State (*turya*) (of consciousness) and the one Beyond the Fourth (*turyātīta*).

In brief, initiation into the liberated state 'Beyond the Fourth' of oneness with Śiva, the supreme subject, can take place with the same ease as the exercise of awareness.

Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in the conclusion of his commentary on the first *sūtra* of the *Heart of Recognition* to illustrate that the ultimate practice is the Blissful Means (*sukhopāya*), which is simply recognition that everything is Śiva consciousness. He quotes it twice in his commentary on as many *Śivasūtras*. The first one declares that 'The bliss of the Light is the joy of contemplation.'[291]

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[290] *vimarśamayapramātrāveśaḥ saiva hetuḥ parijñāne upāyo yasyāḥ* | p. 5) *anena ca sukhopāyatvam uktam.*

[291] *lokānandaḥ samādhisukham* ŚSū 1/19

Bhāskara comments: 'The supreme, pure light of consciousness which is as if inwardly and externally manifest (*udita*) is the eternal and Ubiquitous Lord (*vibhu*), Who is all things and their essential nature as well as their arising (*sarvabhāvodbhava*). Know that to be the Light. It is that which is said to be Bliss. This radiant, unconditioned nature, which shines at one with the light of consciousness, is called the 'joy of contemplation' because it attends one-pointedly solely to its relish. Or else the joy of contemplation is said to be the delight inherent in one's own nature (*svapramoda*) (present) in the two states, subject and object, which unfold together as one.'

The other *sūtra* says that 'the movement of the vital breath is stilled' by concentrating on the centre within the nose. Of what use (then) are the left and right channels or *suṣumnā*?'[292]

83) Detachment from the body by experiencing the consciousness in others' bodies like one's own.

स्ववदन्यशरीरेऽपि संवित्तिमनुभावयेत् ।
अपेक्षां स्वशरीरस्य त्यक्त्वा व्यापी दिनैर्भवेत् ॥ १०७ ॥

svavad anyaśarīre'pi saṃvittim anubhāvayet |
apekṣāṃ svaśarīrasya tyaktvā vyāpī dinair bhavet || 107 ||

One should experience (*anubhāvayet*) the consciousness in someone else's body also as (one does within) one's own. Giving up concern for one's own body, one becomes (all) pervading within days. (107) (106)

Word-for-word meaning: *anubhāvayet* One should experience *saṃvittim* the consciousness *anyaśarīre'pi* in someone else's body also *svavad* as (one does within) one's own. *tyaktvā* Giving up *apekṣāṃ* concern *svaśarīrasya* for one's own body *bhavet* one becomes *vyāpī* (all) pervading *dinair* within days.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Reflecting (when seeing another person) that 'this universe is his body' and abandoning the concern for one's own body as different (from every other), (when viewing the other person's body, one experiences) that 'this is not my body and it differs from (all) else.' (However, on the contrary), by firmly con-

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[292] *nāsikāntarmadhyasaṁyamāt kim atra savyāpasavyasauṣumneṣu* || Ibid. 3/44

templating his own pure consciousness alone within all else, he becomes pervasive **'within days.'** This is the overall sense.

Śivopādhyāya

Abandoning (one's obsessive) concern for one's own body, one should only contemplate that the pure consciousness (present in one's own body) is present in the other (person's) body also. That is, one should contemplate that the conscious nature that has been identified with one's own body (is present) in the outer body of another (person also). This is (said in) *Videhakaivalyasiddhi* (the Accomplishment of Disembodied Liberation):

'those intent on that, established in that, that are of that nature and think of that ...'

'When one is endowed with knowledge and right conduct with respect to a Brahmin, a cow (or) a mare.'

Here, as (is taught) everywhere (in the scriptures), one achieves the Great Liberation from the Body by the glorious (power) (*māhātmya*) of the vision of the Brahman. Then the yogi experiences the joy of roaming around (impelled) by the will to do this or that within the sphere of the womb (of Nature in various bodies) that are *sāttvika* and the like, each one of many kinds, in the course of entering other people's bodies (*parakāyapraveśa*) and similar (yogic practices).

How (does he do that)? He should reflect that the conscious nature, which is independent of the body, pervades everywhere. He imparts this teaching by way of a metaphor, saying: **'(one should experience consciousness in someone else's body also) as (one does within) one's own.'** Just as having abandoned dependence on one's own body within one's self, the reflective awareness of one's own consciousness develops, in the same way, (the yogi practices) the contemplation (*bhāvanā*) of the presence of the conscious nature in another body, whether living or dead. The yogi's proof (that this does happen) here is his own will, (that is, he experiences that this takes place as he wishes).

(When he enters) a living body, (he gains) control (of it) and the fruit (of his doing so) is the emergence of the (yogic) accomplishments of control over (the other person) wherever he desires. In the case of a dead body, even that

of a king, the purpose is to play in this way and that by entering into that body by the strength of the reflective awareness of his own consciousness.

The point is as follows: The conscious nature is never dependent on the body. The reason for this is that the conscious nature is present everywhere, independently of its presence in embodied beings. Just as when one is asleep, the presence of the conscious Self as the witness of the dream state (is apparent) because it manifests (in that way). If it were otherwise (and no perceiver were to be perceived), who (could one say) is sleeping?

Similarly, the Self is pervaded by the condition of the radiant pulse of pure consciousness and bliss, in the state of deep contemplative absorption (*samādhi*), that is, in the Fourth State, because (the yogi) is attentive. The meaning is that it differs from the lack of perception and awareness (*jñāna*) of the body and the senses (in the state) referred to as deep sleep. In this way, it is well said that the Self, which is consciousness, is not obscured by the three bodies (physical, mental or vital) in the four states (of waking, dreaming, deep sleep and the Fourth). Having also abandoned (all) dependence on each (and every) body, in all the states, it is (completely) free (and independent).

'Concern for one's own body .... etc. In reality, as is the case with one's own body, so too within other bodies also, everywhere (in all cases) amongst the mass of objects. (As is said in the *Īśvarapratyabhijñā*) 'the Lord's knowledge and action (operate) in all phenomena that are like limbs of his own body.'[293] (In this way, one) should experience consciousness within the entire mass of bodies (that are experienced as) limbs of one's own (body). How (does that take place)? Having given up dependence on one's own body, (one should reflect that): "all the universe is my own body because the pure conscious nature is equally present everywhere. This low body is not like a limb that is (only) in one place. How can it be that even when this body (which is like a) limb (with respect to other bodies) is destroyed, all the other bodies (continue) to be mine?" (Thinking) in this way, one should give up dependence on one's own body that has been made the object of self-arrogation (*mamatā*). Otherwise, (without that sense of identity), it would be like a corpse, that is, as if dead and the (residue) of the vital breath would be located solely in the neck (once the rest of it) has come forth out of the other limbs. This is described in the *Virupākṣapañcaśikā* (where we read):

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[293] *Īśvarapratyabhijñā* 4/1/4

'Having come forth in all directions from the body, the (residual) subjectivity is fixed in (just) one part of the body, like the vital breath stirring in the throat (of a dying man). Clearly, a person (in this condition, although) still alive, is (as if) dead.'

Therefore, by reflecting on the presence of consciousness that depends on the body (as being) elsewhere (in other people's bodies also), he becomes all-pervasive within a few days.

84) Cessation of thought, self-realization and identification with Deity

निराधारं मनः कृत्वा विकल्पान् न विकल्पयेत् ।
तदात्मपरमात्मत्वे भैरवो मृगलोचने ॥ १०८ ॥

nirādhāraṃ manaḥ kṛtvā vikalpān na vikalpayet |
tadātmaparamātmatve bhairavo mṛgalocane || 108 ||

Freeing the mind of (all) support, one should not conceive (any) thoughts. O gazelle-eyed one, then (the individual) self is (merged in) the Supreme Self and so is (recognized to be) Bhairava. (108) (107)

Word-for-word meaning: *nirādhāraṃ manaḥ kṛtvā* Freeing the mind of (all) support, *na vikalpayet* one should not conceive *vikalpān* (any) thoughts. *mṛgalocane* O gazelle-eyed one, *tadā* then *ātmaparamātmatve* (the individual) self is (merged in) the Supreme Self *bhairavo* (and so is recognized to be) Bhairava.

According to Swamijī, this is the Śāmbhava state, which is by definition that of consciousness free of thought constructs.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

All this should be abandoned, it is (just a false) superimposition (*adhyāsa*) on one's own (true) innate nature. What is projected (is uncertain) like (the doubt as to whether something seen in the dark) is a person or a pillar and so as it has no essence, it should be abandoned. This is the point. (Having realized) in this way, that one's own Self is without support and attained stability in the Supreme Self or else attained a state of merger (into it) and discerned (it), the Supreme Self itself is (realized to be) Bhairava. This is the meaning.

Śivopādhyāya

If, once the mind has been freed of external and internal support (i.e. perceptions and thoughts), the power of (the mind's) intention (*saṃkalpakalā*) does not conceive (more thoughts), then the individual soul (that is then) in the state of the Supreme Self, is Bhairava Himself. The (limited, confined) condition of the individual soul is due to the power of (the mind's) intention (to formulate thoughts), whereas (its) condition as the Brahman is (due to) the plane free of thoughts. Therefore, one should not create thoughts.

'Recognizing that "I am (the one) who possesses this glory (that manifests as all things)," even when the thought constructs of (the Lord), who is the universe, are flowing, (His state as) the Great Lord (persists).'[294]

Explaining the two-fold recognition in accord with this teaching, namely, (the realization that) "I am He" is the essential nature of pure awakened consciousness and "this universe is my creative expansion (*sphāra*)," he explains the first aspect (*pratīka*), namely, "I am He."

Discussion

Here again, as in several other places, the commentator is not content to let the text speak for itself. It is quite clear and there can be no doubt that the *Vijñānabhairava* is teaching that the mind should be freed from thought. Thus, dissolving it away and with it the individual self, it leads to the realization of one's own true nature. Although the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that this by itself is essentially the realization of the Self's identity with Deity, Śivopādhyāya cannot resist examining the process by which this takes place according to the Pratyabhijñā, thus, introducing the concept we have seen is entirely absent in the *Vijñānabhairava*, namely that of the super ego.[295]

85) Meditation on Śiva's attributes leads to identification with Him

सर्वज्ञः सर्वकर्ता च व्यापकः परमेश्वरः ।
स एवाहं शैवधर्मा इति दाढ्र्याद्भवेच्छिवः ॥ १०९ ॥

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[294] ĪP 4/1/12. The same verse with some variants in the first line, is quoted above by Ānandabhaṭṭa in his commentary on v. 29. See note there.

[295] See introduction.

sarvajñaḥ sarvakartā ca vyāpakaḥ parameśvaraḥ |
sa evāhaṃ śaivadharmā iti dārḍhyād bhavec chivaḥ || 109 ||

"The Supreme Lord is omniscient, does everything and is (all) pervading. I myself am He, who possesses Śiva's attributes." By the firmness (and stability of this conviction), one becomes Śiva. (109) (108)

Word-for-word meaning: *parameśvaraḥ* The Supreme Lord *sarvajñaḥ* is omniscient, *sarvakartā* does everything *ca* and *vyāpakaḥ* is (all) pervading. *sa evāhaṃ* I myself am He, *śaivadharmā* who possesses Śiva's attributes. *dārḍhyād* By the firmness (and stability of this conviction), *bhavec chivaḥ* one becomes Śiva.

Swami Lakshmanjoo (2002: p. 130) explains: 'In fact, Lord Śiva is all, full of knowledge, full of action and all-pervading.... Concentrate on Lord Śiva for a while. Then, after a while, when you have fully concentrated on the awareness of Lord Śiva, put that awareness in your own consciousness, in your own individual being. Think that your individual consciousness is one with Lord Śiva, who is all knowledge, all action, all-pervading. In this way, when your mind and awareness are firmly established, you become one with Śiva.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

"He Himself is me and I am He." "This is Śiva's Śiva nature (*śaivadharma*) whose freedom and the rest (of His divine attributes) are all mine." By this firm conviction (*bhāvanā*), one attains oneness with Supreme Śiva.

Śivopādhyāya

"This is Śiva's Śiva nature (*śaivadharma*)," "I am he who possesses Śiva's nature, that is, pure freedom and the rest (His divine attributes). He Himself is me and I myself am He." Śivahood (is attained) by (this) contemplation because it is free of doubt. This is (*Śāktopāya*) the empowered state (of practice).

Discussion

Jayaratha quotes this verse (in TĀv ad 5/71cd-72ab) at the conclusion of his explanation of one of the ways the yogi enters the Heart, that is, the core of consciousness, while he experiences the universal pervasion of consciousness

as the state of unfolding contemplation (*vikāsasamādhi*) attained by the realization, which gathers all things together, that he is all things.

Elsewhere, Jayaratha introduces this verse saying: 'this arousal (of aesthetic delight) takes place, brought about by the enthusiasm which is the wonder of the outpouring of supreme bliss. While that is taking place, noetic consciousness rests within (that) activity which, characterized as the freedom (of consciousness), is essentially (the activity of pure) self-awareness alone.'

Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in his commentary on the *Śivasūtra* that declares that 'discriminating insight is the knowledge of the Self.'[296] He explains that 'the discriminating insight which (operates) in the midst of (the many and) diverse limiting conditions (*upādhi*) is the right discernment of the single uninterrupted awareness (*vimarśa*) of one's own true nature (*svasvabhāva*) which serves to attain the recognition (*pratyabhijñā*) that the Self is Śiva. Know this to be the highest means to realisation in which one experiences the true Self (*satyātman*) directly. Therefore, (this is) the supreme unfolding of the intuitive awareness of the pure Self.'

Swamijī says that this is '*Śāktopāya* with some touch of *Śāmbhavopāya*.' It is *Śāktopāya* because the practice almost entirely consists of reforming the notions one has of one's own identity and so involves working with thought, which is the domain of this category of practice. In moments of success, consciousness is free from notions and simply experiences this reality directly and so the practice develops into *Śāmbhavopāya*, which is the category of practice grounded in consciousness free of thought.

86) Flames are fire, waves are the sea, rays are the sun and the universe am I, Bhairava

जलस्येवोर्मयो वह्नेर्ज्वालाभङ्ग्यः प्रभा रवेः ॥
ममैव भैरवस्यैता विश्वभङ्ग्यो विभेदिताः ॥ ११० ॥

jalasyevormayo vahner jvālābhaṅgyaḥ prabhā raveḥ |
mamaiva bhairavasyaitā viśvabhaṅgyo vibheditāḥ[297] || 110 ||

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[296] *vitarka ātmajñānam* ŚSū 1/17.

[297] The last line is quoted in TĀv ad 3/84 (84cd-85ab). There MSs Ch, Jh, Ḍ, Ñ, and Ṭ of the TĀv: read *vicitratā* 'wonderfully various' for *vibheditāḥ*. The others read *vinirgatāḥ*—'have come forth'. The full verse is quoted in TĀv ad ad 5/71cd-72ab (71).

(Just as) waves are (those) of water itself (*eva*), flames of fire and rays of the sun, (in the same way) these cosmic waves of Bhairava, differentiated (from Him and one another) are my very own. (110) (109)

Word-for-word meaning: *jalasyevormayo* (Just as) waves are (those) of water, *vahner jvālābhaṅgyaḥ* flames of fire *prabhā raveḥ* rays of the sun, *bhairavasyaitā viśvabhaṅgyo* the cosmic waves of Bhairava, *vibheditāḥ* differentiated (from Him and one another) *mamaiva* are my very own.

Swami Lakshmanjoo explains (2002: p. 131): 'This *dhāraṇā* [meditation] is *unmīlana* (with open eyes). As waves and tides are one with water and the tongues of flames are one with fire and the rays of the sun are one with the sun, in the same way, all the universal currents are one with me, arise from me, who is one with Bhairava.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Just as waves of water (arise) from water, flames from fire or sunrays from the sun, in the same way, '**these cosmic waves (arise) from Bhairava.**' The rest (that is implied to complete the sense is that) one should contemplate the coming and going (of the breath), (whilst) eating and offering sacrifice, making gifts, flowing along, coming forth and the like.

Śivopādhyāya

'**Cosmic waves**' are the waves of diverse (*vicchitti*) transmigratory existence. They are '**differentiated,**' which means that differences (between them) have arisen. In this way, he knows that 'He is me and I am He' in one way, and recognizes in another that, 'this is my glory'. This is the order of the words. (The emphatic enclitic) indeclinable '*eva*' (repeated) two (times) indicates the two kinds of recognition. This is because they denote (two alternative) ways (*prakāra*) (of understanding this realization), otherwise (if this were not so), they would (simply) amount to repetitions. All those who imagine variant readings such as 'all this is mine' (*sarvo mamāyaṃ*) or 'this is my creation'

There the reading is as it is in the printed edition of the *Vijñānabhairava*. See note there for details.

(*sargo mamāyaṃ*) (to avoid repeating '*eva*') are learned only according to their own reckoning. "I myself (*eva*) am he who possesses Śiva's nature" (*sa evāhaṃ śaivadharmā*)," and "these, Bhairava's (cosmic waves), are my very own (*eva*) (*mamaiva bhairavasyaitā*)"—these two statements refer to two separate meditations taught by the Supreme Lord. Although, they have seen that (those who maintain a different view continue to be) foolish.

The fettered soul is not some separate soul different (from Śiva, rather) I (am He). Moreover, I am He whose nature is light, and He is none but me, certainly not some other. Thus, 'He is me'. This reversal (*pratīka*) is explained extensively by the author of the *Pratyabhijñāsūtravimarśinī*. In the same way, 'this is my glory'—the second aspect of recognition, should be clarified. Thus, although the '**glory**' that is my freedom is a creation of thought, it has been made clear that this is my nature. (The realisation comes all of a sudden) like a slap on the face to a person sensitive to beauty (*sahṛdaya*) who explained it before (to others), and, having experienced them for himself, they should be extremely clear. (This) two-fold recognition has thus been established.

Discussion

Kṣemarāja refers to this meditation in his commentary on the *Śivasūtra* that declares that: 'the perceptible is (His) body.'[298] He explains that: 'the Lord is (both) the outpouring of all existing things (as well) as the seed (cause) of all (that comes into being). (His) nature is pure consciousness and, because (He) pervades (everything), His body is not (just) one. Nothing exists outside (Him) and every single perceivable thing born of thought is (His) body because (He) pervades (all things) as (He) is the coming into being of everything. (Moreover), every physical body belongs to Him because the conscious nature (of every living being, various), according to its own particular type, is one. He, to whom the object of perception (appears to be) separate from the body (only in the way an object does), reflected in a mirror, pervades (all that is perceptible) and so is the abode of the wealth of liberation.'

According to Swamijī, this practice starts in *Śāktopāya* and ends in *Śāmbhava* state. This is the expansion of consciousness that takes place when the yogi enters a state of absorption with the eyes open (*unmīlana*) as he rises out of the introverted absorption with the eyes closed (*nimīlana*). The medita-

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[298] ŚSū 1/14 *dṛśyaṃ śarīram*.

tion is on the same model as the previous one. It begins with the replacement of common mistaken, limited notions of one's own identity and nature of the world with correct ones, leading to the direct experience of the expanded consciousness of insight.

87) Wandering around and falling exhausted to the ground

भ्रान्त्वा भ्रान्त्वा शरीरेण त्वरितं भुवि पातनात् ।
क्षोभशक्तिविरामेण परा संजायते दशा ॥ १११ ॥

bhrāntvā bhrāntvā śarīreṇa tvaritaṃ bhuvi pātanāt |
kṣobhaśaktivirāmeṇa parā saṃjāyate daśā || 111 ||

After wandering about (for a long time) repeatedly, by falling quickly to the ground with the body (thoroughly exhausted) and relaxing the power (that) agitates (the wayfarer's body), the supreme state arises. (111) (110)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhrāntvā bhrāntvā* After wandering about (for a long time) repeatedly, *pātanāt* by falling *tvaritaṃ* quickly *bhuvi* to the ground *śarīreṇa* with the body (thoroughly exhausted) *kṣobhaśaktivirāmeṇa* relaxing the power that agitates (the wayfarer's body), *parā daśā* the supreme state *saṃjāyate* arises.

Swamijī: 'Go on walking and walking ... for instance, go to Amarnath pilgrimage ... when your body aches, you want to lie down somewhere, ... just lie down on the ground at once, put your body absolutely motionless on the ground.... Then enter in *samādhi*. Actually, it happens to yogis when they are absolutely tired; they sit, close their eyes, and enter in that God consciousness. This is *Śāmbhavopāya* ... You have nothing to do, only enter in God consciousness after resting. You rest and enter into that.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having[299] attained thousands of births and rebirths in the wombs of human beings, gods, demons and animals (going in a round from one to the

[299] Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *śarīreṣu* 'in bodies' for *śarīreṇa* and so understands the wandering to be from body to body, not actually physically wandering about and comments accordingly.

other) like circumambulating (a sacred place), then (for the yogi) free of grief, the supreme state arises by the fall of a true teacher's (gracious) gaze (upon him).[300] The very same is declared in the Spanda (teachings, where it says):

'An individual who, (though) desirous of doing various things, (but) is incapable of doing them due to his innate impurity, (experiences) the supreme state (*paramaṃ padam*) when the disruption (*kṣobha*) (of his false ego) ceases.'[301]

Śivopādhyāya

Whether as a worshipper, runner or traveler, circumambulating Pradyumnapīṭha and other (such sacred sites) with the body, night and day or, having wandered about aided by one's own body (supported by) the seasoned practice of walking the roads, at the end (when one is exhausted), '**falling quickly to the ground**', that is to say, once the body is on the ground and the power of (his) agitation (*vega*) is relaxed, the supreme state free of thought constructs arises.

88) Realization at the end of the agitation due to the incapacity of the senses and paralysis of the mind due to ignorance

आधारेष्वथवाऽशक्त्याऽज्ञानाच्चित्तलयेन वा ॥
जातशक्तिसमावेशक्षोभान्ते भैरवं वपुः ॥ ११२ ॥

ādhāreṣv athavā'śaktyā 'jñānāc cittalayena vā |
jātaśaktisamāveśakṣobhānte bhairavaṃ vapuḥ || 112 ||

Bhairava's body (manifests) at the end of the agitation caused by the penetration of the power (of consciousness) that arises due to the incapacity of the (senses to operate) in (their) foundations or else by the dissolving away of the mind (*cittalaya*) (and its paralysis) due to ignorance. (112) (111)

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[300] Ānandabhaṭṭa may have had a different reading in front of him. Perhaps, something like *dṛṣṭipātanāt*—'by the fall of (the teacher's) gaze' for *bhuvi pātanāt*—'falling to the ground'. A third kind of 'falling' he sees here is the falling away of the soul's innate binding Impurity—*malapatanāt*.

[301] SpKā 9

Word-for-word meaning: *bhairavaṃ vapuḥ* Bhairava's body (manifests) *jātaśaktisamāveśakṣobhānte* at the end of the agitation caused by the penetration of (His) power (that arises) *āśaktyā* due to the incapacity of the (senses to operate) *ādhāreṣv* in (their) foundations (of perception) *cittalayena vā* or by the dissolving away of the mind (*cittalaya*) (and its paralysis) *ajñānāc* due to ignorance.

Swamijī: '... when you are blind, you want to perceive that object, but you cannot perceive that ... but you have curiosity to see it.... Or, if you want to assimilate some point in some book, but because of (your) ignorance, you cannot understand it ... only curiosity remains.... Just meditate on that curiosity in which you are floating without understanding anything. Then, your mind will not function. (Then), the power to know it but not knowing, power to assimilate that but not assimilating ... diverts into the internal vacuum of God consciousness.... This is *Śāktopāya.*

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The mind dissolves away (and is paralysed) because one is incapable of knowing (certain) things or, because there is no knowledge (of them). At the end of the agitation that arises because of that, which is brought about by penetrating into a (transcendental) power that has not come forth (*anāśrita*) (into immanence), Bhairava's body manifests. This is the meaning.

Śivopādhyāya

(There is a sort of) mental paralysis (*cittalaya*) (lit. 'dissolving away of the mind') that is due either to the lack of capacity (on the part of the perceiver and the senses to operate) in the domain of perception or the entities (that are their objects) or else the dissolving away of the mind (and mental paralysis) that takes place due to ignorance, that is, the absence of perception (*jñāna*) brought about by that. (When that happens), penetration (follows) into the energy (of consciousness) called 'transcendent' (that has not come forth into the manifested state) (*anāśrita*). At the end of agitation, that is, when the instability (of the mind) comes to an end, and while that takes place, '**Bhairava's body (manifests)**', that is, (His) form is the state of bliss mentioned previously of the experience of His own nature.

Immediate Liberation by Gazing outwards, viewing the Light Within

89) Staring without blinking

संप्रदायमिमं देवि शृणु सम्यग्वदाम्यहम् ।
कैवल्यं जायते सद्यो नेत्रयोः स्तब्धमात्रयोः ॥ ११३ ॥

saṃpradāyam imaṃ devi śṛṇu samyag vadāmy aham |
kaivalyaṃ jāyate sadyo netrayoḥ stabdhamātrayoḥ || 113 ||

O Goddess, listen to this, the traditional teaching (*saṃpradāya*). I shall tell (you what it is) properly. The liberated state (*kaivalya*) arises immediately, just when the eyes are fixed without blinking. (113) (112)

Word-for-word meaning: *devi* O Goddess, *śṛṇu* listen *imaṃ* (to) this *saṃpradāyam* traditional teaching. *aham* I *vadāmy* shall tell (you what it is) *samyag* properly. *kaivalyaṃ* The liberated state *jāyate* arises *sadyo* immediately, *netrayoḥ* just when the eyes *stabdhamātrayoḥ* are fixed without blinking.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By forgetting all this universe made of unity and diversity, the yogi fixes his attention on his inner Self, where the Light of consciousness (shines). This is the sense (*artha*) intended in all these teachings, both those already stated and those that will be imparted, namely, the practice of the one-pointed concentration of the mind (attained) by attending to (pure) consciousness alone.

Discussion

Kṣemarāja quotes a line from this meditation in the course of his commentary on the following verse in the *Svacchandatantra*.

'He who has accomplished the goal is well contented, beyond phenomenal (fettered) existence, thoroughly pure, his eyes blooming (with delight) and tranquil, he should contemplate his satisfied Self.'[302]

Kṣemarāja comments: 'One who has accomplished his goal, which is the manifestation of Śiva's state that destroys (all) the fetters, is accordingly 'well

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[302] *kṛtakṛtyaḥ prahṛṣṭātmā bhavottīrṇaḥ sunirmalaḥ* ||
protphullanayanaḥ śāntas tṛptātmānaṃ tu bhāvayet | SvT 4/452cd-453ab

contented', experiencing the bliss of full (and perfect) consciousness. Thus, he is 'beyond phenomenal (fettered) existence.' He is 'very', that is, thoroughly 'pure' by virtue of the manifestation of Supreme Śiva's state. Although he is like that, when, for example, he emerges out of deep meditation, he should contemplate the excellence of his own experience as the dense (uninterrupted) bliss of consciousness that arises on such occasions as (receiving) the teacher's teachings, so that he may always be of that nature (*tanmaya*). In order to clarify the means (to apply), here he states the cause (of this) by means of an adjective (describing him, saying that) 'his eyes are blooming (with delight) and tranquil.'

His eyes are fixed without blinking on (the reality) that cannot be perceived and he is 'tranquil', that is, the net of all (his) thought constructs has fallen away as his desires cease in accord with the secret teaching that 'the liberated state (*kaivalya*) arises immediately just when the eyes are fixed without blinking.'

90) Blocking the ears and the lower door, meditating on Unstruck Sound

संकोचं कर्णयोः कृत्वा ह्यधोद्वारे तथैव च।
अनच्कमहलं ध्यायन्विशेद्ब्रह्म सनातनम्॥ ११४॥

saṃkocaṃ karṇayoḥ kṛtvā hy adhodvāre tathaiva ca |
anackam ahalaṃ dhyāyan viśed brahma sanātanam || 114 ||

Having blocked the ears (with the thumbs) and so too the lower door (of the anus with the heel), meditating on (Unstruck Sound) devoid of vowels and consonants, (the yogi) enters the eternal Brahman. (114)

Word-for-word meaning: *saṃkocaṃ karṇayoḥ kṛtvā* Having blocked the ears (with the thumbs) *tathaiva ca* and so too *adhodvāre* the lower door (of the anus with heel), *dhyāyan* meditating on *anackam ahalaṃ* (Unstruck Sound) devoid of vowels and consonants, *viśed* (the yogi) enters *sanātanam* the eternal *brahma* Brahman.

Swamijī: 'just keep your eyes wide open, don't see anything, ... and you will get freedom from repeated births and deaths.' This and the previous meditation are *Śāmbhavopāya*.

Śivopādhyāya[303]

The **'lower door'** is the anal cavity. Having closed it with the heel of his own (foot, the yogi meditates on Unstruck Sound that is) **'devoid of consonants'**—*ahalam*. This reading is deviant scriptural Sanskrit (*aiśapāṭha*) meaning *hal-rahitam*. The rest is clear.

91) Gazing down into the abyss or a deep well

कूपादिके महागर्ते स्थित्वोपरि निरीक्षणात् ।
अविकल्पमतेः सम्यक् सद्यश्चित्तलयः स्फुटम् ॥ ११५ ॥

kūpādike mahāgarte sthitvopari nirīkṣaṇāt |
avikalpamateḥ samyak sadyaś cittalayaḥ sphuṭam || 115 ||

Standing on the edge (of a deep) well and the like, (or) a great abyss, by gazing (down into it), the mind of one whose mind is free of thoughts properly, immediately, and clearly dissolves away. (115) (113)

Word-for-word meaning: *sthitvopari* Standing on the edge *kūpādike* (of a deep) well or the like, *mahāgarte* a great abyss, *nirīkṣaṇāt* by gazing (down into it), *avikalpamateḥ* the mind of one whose mind is free of thoughts *samyak* properly, *sadyaś* immediately, *sphuṭam* and clearly *cittalayaḥ* dissolves away.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The overall sense is as follows. If it manifests in this way, there is no 'blue' or 'yellow' here (in this case) at all amongst objects of perception and those that are not, rather, what appears here is the manifestation of Bhairava's extremely fierce body.

Śivopādhyāya

The expression **'and the like'** in **'a well and the like'** includes mountain peaks and the like. **'Standing (on the edge of) a great abyss'**, that is, a large cavity (in the ground), **'like a well.'** The sense of the locative case is to denote the close proximity (to that which is in the locative case). A hole in a lattice window

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[303] Ānandabhaṭṭa omits this verse.

cools the air (that passes through it). Similarly, standing, when a great mass of storm clouds or the like is close by (in the sky) above, the mind is freed of thought by viewing with an unwavering gaze, the (empty) space of a well or the like (in which the clouds are reflected). The mind of one whose intellect abides, (thus,) free of thought, certainly becomes completely tranquil at that (very) moment. The word *avikalpamateḥ*—'the mind of one whose mind' is a descriptive compound that contains a descriptive compound.

Discussion

According to Swamijī, this meditation is in *Śāktopāya*, but that cannot be so. We are expressly told, as in several other meditations, that the mind of the yogi, who practices this way, dissolves away. Thus, it is free of thoughts, which is a cardinal defining characteristic of *Śāmbhavopāya*. It would be in *Śāktopāya* initially, if the yogi is overcome with fear and his mind is accordingly racing with thought.

92) Śiva is present everywhere internally and externally

यत्र यत्र मनो याति बाह्ये वाभ्यन्तरेऽपि वा ।
तत्र तत्र शिवावस्था व्यापकत्वात्क्व यास्यति ॥ ११६ ॥

yatra yatra mano yāti bāhye vābhyantare'pi vā |
tatra tatra śivāvasthā vyāpakatvāt kva yāsyati || 116 ||

Wherever the mind goes, whether outside or within, Śiva's state is present there. (Śiva) pervades (everything), so where (else) could it go?[304] (116) (114)

Word-for-word meaning: *yatra yatra* Wherever *mano* the mind *yāti* goes, *bāhye* outside *vābhyantare'pi vā* or so too within, *śivāvasthā* Śiva's state *tatra tatra* (is present) there. *vyāpakatvāt* (Śiva) pervades (everything), so *kva* where (else) *yāsyati* could it go?

Swamijī: 'Keep your mind absolutely loose; don't control it, don't put any effort to control it. Keep your mind loose (in the) outside objective world and in the inside objective world.... See that this is only the expansion of God, the

[304] *Cf. also* VBh 117 and 129.

expansion of your own consciousness, and that your consciousness is pervading outside ... where that state of Śiva *bhāva* will go? It is there! It is *Śāmbhavopāya.*

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'Wherever the mind, which is fickle and unfirm, goes by itself (spontaneously), having fixed it there,[305] bring it under control within (one's) Self.' According to this, the Lord's oral teaching, wherever the mind goes, be it (to perceive the colour) blue, yellow or the like, Śiva's state is present there as (its) inner nature. By (maintaining this) certainty, Bhairava manifests.

And the same is affirmed in the venerable Spanda (teachings) beginning with (the words):

'Everything arises (out of) the individual soul, and so he is all things because he perceives his identity with the awareness (he has) of them. Therefore, there is no state in the thoughts of words or (their) meanings that is not Śiva. It is the enjoyer alone who always and everywhere abides as the object of enjoyment. Or, constantly attentive, and perceiving the entire universe as play, he who has this awareness (*saṃvitti*) is undoubtedly liberated in this very life.'[306]

Śivopādhyāya

'Wherever the mind,' thought, sensation (*vedana*) **'goes,'** that is, extends, Śiva's state and residence (*avasthāna*) is there, within the radiating, pulsing principle of consciousness. So **'where (else) could it go?'** It will not go anywhere. The reason for this is that **'(Śiva) pervades (everything).'** The meaning is that (this is) because, (the countless) locations, times and forms are essentially the light of consciousness and they do not divide up Bhairava, Who is one's own Self and nature is the Light (of consciousness). In the texts (*śāstra*) on Yoga, this state is said to be the seventh (level of) contemplative absorption (*samādhi*), which is direct perception (of reality), permanent, effortless and attained by the maturity of the group of six absorptions.

Moreover, in this way, the characteristic (features) of the six absorptions are taught there (in that text) itself to be (as follows). Absorption (*samādhi*) is the

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[305] Read *tatra tatra* for *tatas tato.*

[306] SpKā 28–30 also quoted above by Ānandabhaṭṭa in the commentary on v 33.

stability of the mind because it is just the state of the Brahman which is non-dual and nature undivided. That can be 1) external or 2) internal. There (in that context, the internal) absorption that should be placed within the Heart is of two kinds, according to whether it is (4) and 5)) associated with thought or (3) and 6)) devoid of it. The one with thought is also of two kinds. (4)) One is associated with (an outer) object of perception. (5) The other) is associated (only with) speech.[307] (They are as follows.)

1) The characteristic of absorption associated with the object of perception is (defined in) the *Vākyasudhā* (as follows).

'Desire and the like are similar to the mind, and so (the yogi) should meditate on (mental) awareness (*cetanā*) as their witness. This absorption with thought (*savikalpakasamādhi*) is threaded through with the object of perception.'

This is gross absorption (*samādhi*) with thought.

2) He (goes on to) teach the second (level of) absorption, which is subtle and with thought, there itself (in the same book where we read):

'The state of concentration with thought is detached. It is Being, Consciousness and Bliss, self-luminous, devoid of duality, and threaded through with (the sense) of 'I am'.'

The contemplative state (*sampatti*) of the two (kinds of) absorption (gross and subtle) is attained) gradually and with effort in this way.

3) (Now) he talks about the absorption, free of thought that occurs (spontaneously) by itself.

'By penetrating into the aesthetic savor (*rasa*) of the experience of one's own (deeper Self), having abandoned dependence on the object of perception

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[307] These seven absorptions correspond to seven levels of Voidness taught in the *Svacchandatantra*. See discussion of the above verse 20. The six kinds of absorption (*samādhi*) are described here as follows:

1) External—absorption associated with the object of perception. Gross absorption with thought. (Moon)
2) Subtle with thought (*savikalpaka*). (Sun)
3) Spontaneous, free of thought (*nirvikalpaka*). (Fire)
4) Absorption with thought threaded through with the object of perception.
5) Absorption in which thought operates and is threaded through with the word.
6) Absorption devoid of thought.

and words, (this is) the absorption free of thought constructs (which is unmoving) like (the flame of a) lamp in a windless place.'

Such are the two (absorptions) with thought (*savikalpaka*) and one free of thought (*nirvikalpaka*), making three absorptions. He (then goes on to) explain how these three absorptions have the Sun, Moon and Sky as their external support.

4) (He continues by defining the fourth kind of absorption.)

'As in the heart so too in an outer place, in whatever entity it be, the first (kind of) absorption, aloof from name and form, is in pure Being alone.'

This is (the kind of) absorption with thought threaded through with the object of perception.

5) (Next), there itself (in the *Vākyasudhā*), he talks about (the kind of) absorption in which thought operates and is threaded through with word.

'The middle (kind of) absorption is the unbroken thought directed at a reality (*vastu*) which is one undivided aesthetic savor (*rasa*), the characteristic of which is Being, Consciousness and Bliss.'

6) Here, (in this case) also, (there is a kind of) absorption of the mind (*manas*) which is free of thought and action because its sole form is the Brahman as (is said in the following verse):

'The third (kind of absorption, free of thought,) is considered to be like the previous one because it (is the experience of) the relish of the aesthetic savor of the state of stasis (*stabdhībhāva*). (The yogi) should pass (his) time constantly with these six absorptions.'

A mirror image of this verse, (found here in the *Vijñānabhairava*, is found) there (in the same text that says):

'(The yogi experiences) the absorptions there wherever the mind goes when the identification with the body has ceased and the Supreme Self has been known.'

Discussion

Śivopādhyāya quotes VBh 116 (114) in his commentary of verse 74 (73) that says:

'The mind should be sustained (*dhārayet*) wherever the mind is satisfied. It is there that the inherent nature of Supreme Bliss arises.'

He prefaces VBh 116 (114) there with a line from the *Svacchandatantra* also quoted in MM p. 163 and TĀv ad 5/53cd-54ab. The whole verse declares:

'(For such a great yogi,) wherever (his) mind goes, he should think of (the supreme reality) which is to be known. As everything is Śiva (*Śivamaya*), having moved (from one place), where will it go?'[308]

Scripture supports the validity of this practice, however contrary it may appear to be to the general principles of yogic discipline that demand detachment from objectivity in all its forms, especially those that are pleasing. The key to a correct understanding is what is meant by 'satisfaction.' This question is implicitly answered by declaring that Śiva is everywhere. The only true satisfaction the mind can feel that is lasting and sustained is in that 'place' where it experiences Śiva consciousness. Thus, the entire passage in the *Svacchandatantra* says:

'One whose mental disposition (*bhāva*) is firm (and unwavering), full (without craving) all around (in all aspects) and made of (the supreme reality) which is to be known, his mind, (although) he is in all the states (of consciousness), does not move. (For such a great yogi,) wherever (his) mind goes, he thinks of (the supreme reality) which is to be known. As everything is Śiva (*Śivamaya*), having moved (from one place), where will it go? Present in all the fields (of consciousness) (*viṣaya*) and objects of the senses, wherever one pays attention, there is no place where Śiva is absent.'[309]

Kṣemarāja observes: 'Having known this kind of oneness, (the true yogi) is never deluded. The intended sense of the word 'never' is that (only) false yogis are deluded when they rise out (of introverted meditation).'

The text is so close that it would not be unreasonable to say that one is derived from the other, or has a common source. The *Svacchandatantra* most probably predates the *Vijñānabhairava*. So one may hazard to suggest that the *Vijñānabhairava* drew this verse from there.

Several meditations taught in the *Vijñānabhairava* focused on Śiva's omnipresence understand that to mean that attention may be fixed anywhere to

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[308] *Yatra yatra mano yāti jñeyaṃ tatraiva cintayet* |
Calitvā yāsyate kutra sarvaṃ śivamayaṃ yataḥ ||

[309] SvT 4/312–314. SvT 4/314 is quoted in TĀv ad 1/87–88.

experience Śiva's presence. This takes place by an expansion of *nirvikalpa* consciousness that empties the object upon which the yogi focuses of its objectivity, absorbing it into the emptiness of the unfolding *nirvikalpa* consciousness, within which the mind and senses come to rest. The following meditation is an example of this practice.

93) Wherever the Lord's consciousness manifests in the domain of the senses, their object dissolves away into it.

यत्र यत्राक्षमार्गेण चैतन्यं व्यज्यते विभोः ।
तस्य तन्मात्रधर्मित्वाच्चिल्लयाद्भरितात्मता ॥ ११७ ॥

yatra yatrākṣamārgeṇa caitanyaṃ vyajyate vibhoḥ |
tasya tanmātradharmitvāc cillayād bharitātmatā || 117 ||

Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of the senses, (their object) dissolves away within consciousness, and so, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude (as all things, manifests as the yogi's true nature).[310] (117) (115)

Word-for-word meaning: *yatra yatra* Wherever *caitanyaṃ* the (universal) consciousness *vibhoḥ* of the all-pervading lord *vyajyate* is revealed *akṣamārgeṇa*

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[310] Other translations of this verse by Dyczkowski:

'Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of any one of the senses, it dissolves away within consciousness because it possesses just that same nature and so (the yogi becomes Bhairava, who is) the state of (perfect) plenitude.'

'Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of the senses, (their object) dissolves away within consciousness, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, and so (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude (as all things, manifest as the yogi's true nature).'

'In whichever thing the consciousness of the universal Being is manifested through the senses, consciousness alone is the ground of that appearance. Realizing this, one is dissolved in *cit* or consciousness (which is the ground of the universe) and thus, experiences the entire fullness of being (i.e., the full aspect of *Bhairava* within him).'

through the path of senses, *cillayād* (their object is) dissolved away into consciousness *tanmātradharmitvāc* and so, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, *bharitātmatā* (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude (as all things, manifests as the yogi's true nature).

Swamijī: When you perceive some object through your organs, when you perceive that, just know that this perception exists on the basis of consciousness, on the basis of God consciousness ... just dive deep into that consciousness; at the time of perceiving these objects, don't perceive (these objects), go on, dive deep in that consciousness which is the basis of all these perceptions, (and) *bharitātmatā*, you will become Bhairava.... This is *Śāktopāya*.[311]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed' by meditating on Śiva's state, that dissolves into consciousness. This is because (the universe that manifests within it) is (pure) consciousness alone and so possesses that (very) same nature, (just) as the wonderful diversity of the manifestation that is reflected in a mirror (is one with it). (Thus, there arises) the state of (perfect) plenitude of repose (within consciousness experienced as) "I myself am all things, filled with immense consciousness." Thus, the true state of what is experienced is brought about (*saṃpadyate*) just as ice or solidified clarified butter is understood to be made from a liquid.

Śivopādhyāya

'Wherever,' whether it be, for example, within (the outer colour) blue (or inner experience of) pleasure, **'the (universal) consciousness,'** that is, the Light of consciousness, **'of the all-pervading Lord'** that is, Parabhairava, Who is the Self, **'is revealed'** shining radiantly **'through the path of the senses,'** because that 'blue' and (all else that is perceived objectively) **'possesses that same nature.'** If it were to be separate from consciousness, the contingency would arise that it would not be an object of consciousness like the varied

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[311] *The reason why this meditation is in Śāktopāya is because it brings about the transition from perception framed in mental representations to one immersed in Śiva consciousness.*

reflection in what is just a (physical) mirror. (Thus), having reflected on the nature of the pure consciousness located in the Light (of manifestation), he, who dissolves away into the consciousness that is the screen (upon which) the universe (is projected), possesses the state of Parabhairava. Just as light, that has condensed, becomes the solar orb, so too condensed consciousness shines as the universe. This is the traditional teaching.

Discussion

Jayaratha quotes this meditation in his commentary on the first verse of the *Tantrāloka*.[312] There Abhinava praises his father—Narasiṁhagupta—as 'the one whose light is hidden (*gupta*)' and identifies him with Sadāśiva, who has five faces. The faces, Jayaratha says, represent the five energies, that is, Vāmeśī and the other four Krama goddesses who preside over the senses. The senses are empowered by them when the yogi manages to lay hold of his own pure conscious nature by fixing his attention firmly on it when they are active. Just as the power he gains by this state of withdrawal into inward contemplation (*nimīlanasamādhi*) protects him from outer dispersal, it arouses the divine powers that energize the senses. When this happens, the yogi becomes one (*tanmaya*) with whatever he perceives by means of these powers, checking the formation of dualistic thought constructs by the one-pointed attention that results from the enjoyment of consciousness that they arouse. This is done by maintaining an awareness of the pervasive presence of consciousness within which everything is made manifest. By practicing this awareness diligently, one comes to experience progressively more and more that all that appears in any way does so within consciousness and because of it. Cultivating the insightful awareness that the senses and mind are instruments of consciousness, by means of which all they perceive and conceive are made manifest, the realization develops and strengthens that everything is a manifestation of consciousness. Thus, realizing their essential oneness with it, the manifestations of objects dissolve away, as it were, into consciousness even as they 'feed it' with the delight they inspire, as they arise, persist and fall away at each instant.

Jayaratha is saying that the realized soul recognises that the five senses operate in this way. He is the five-faced Sadāśiva and this is the experience of

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[312] VBh 117 (115) is quoted in TĀv ad 1/1 and TĀv ad 29/113cd-114ab.

the metaphysical principle he embodies, namely, 'I am (all) this' (*aham idam*), which is the result of the activity of the energies of his faces. This state spontaneously leads to that of perfect rest in his own nature as Śiva Himself, the supreme perceiver who is filled with all the phenomena. He has assimilated and made one with His pure conscious nature solely by His intense desire to do so.

This meditation leads to the manifestation of one's own supreme Bhairava nature as the universe, that is, the entire expanse of objectivity. Accordingly, Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in his commentary on ŚSū 3/8 that says: 'waking is the second ray (of consciousness)' (*jāgrad dvitīyakaraḥ*). Bhāskara explains: 'the waking state is said to be the knowledge (born of sensory perception). Observing the field of his (awareness), with it the lord of yogis should gather together all things into a unity, and thus eliminating delusion, should remain well awake at all times and free of duality. The ray (*kara*, of sensory awareness) is like a hand (*kara*), because it has the power to gather together the waking state in this way, and so is said to be the second (ray), because of its wonderful (cosmic) nature.' Kṣemarāja summarizes this cognitive Yoga in a nutshell in his commentary: The meaning is that 'this universe shines forth effulgent, as if it were the rays of his own (consciousness).' (*viśvam asya svadīdhitikalpaṃ sphurati ityarthaḥ*)

Jayaratha quotes an unidentified source as saying: 'The All-pervasive Lord (*vibhu*) Himself blossoms forth wherever the rays (of the senses) unite (within consciousness when they make contact with their objects).'[313] If this takes place, the activity of the mind and senses need not be quelled. Indeed, they can be used to propel the yogi who aspires to liberation to higher states of expanded blissful consciousness. As Abhinava says concerning the experience of this yogi's elevated cognitive Yoga:

'Wherever (this) cycle (of consciousness) (*cakra*) falls, by (its) association with this process (whatever be the sense organ through which it operates), it is indeed all things. (Thus, all the other functions of consciousness follow along with it) like a great emperor, the lord of all the earth (who is followed by his vassal lords).'[314]

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[313] TĀv ad 1/4.

[314] TĀ 5/30cd-31ab.

This meditation is a primary example of cognitive Yoga, that is, the practice of attending to what we perceive as shining within consciousness rather than an object or entity, that exists independently, that impinges on the senses and mind.

94) Attending to the first and last moments of intense emotion and hunger

क्षुताद्यन्ते भये शोके गह्वरे वा रणाद्द्रुते ।
कुतूहले क्षुधाद्यन्ते ब्रह्मसत्तामयी दशा ॥ ११८ ॥

krodhādyante bhaye śoke gahvare vā raṇād drute |
kutūhale kṣudhādyante brahmasattā samīpagā || 118 ||

Just when anger begins and ends, when in fear, grieving, (facing a) deep pit, or fleeing from battle, when (intensely) curious, or when hunger starts or ends, the Being of the Brahman stands close at hand. (118) (116)

Word-for-word meaning: *krodhādyante* When anger begins and ends, *bhaye* in fear, *śoke* in grief, *gahvare* in a deep pit, *vā* or *drute* fleeing *raṇād* from a battle, *kutūhale* when (intensely) curious, *kṣudhādyante* when hunger starts or ends, *brahmasattā* the Being of the Brahman *samīpagā* stands close at hand.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(According to the *Stanzas on Vibration*):

'Spanda is stable in the state one enters when extremely angry, intensely excited, running or wandering what to do.'[315]

The meaning is that by contemplating Bhairava's nature as taught when sneezing[316] and the like, in the way heard from the teacher's mouth, and experienced it, (the aspirant) has accomplished what needs to be done. This has been taught extensively in the *Tantrāloka* and elsewhere and should be understood from there. It is not expounded at length here for fear of making the book too long and so has only been mentioned in brief.

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[315] SpKā 22.

[316] Ānandabhaṭṭa read '*kṣut*', which means 'a sneeze,' for *kṣudh*, which means 'hunger'.

Śivopādhyāya

'Close by' is a variant reading. The '**Being of the Brahman**' is the unconditioned radiant pulse (*sphurattā*) of the bliss of consciousness that is '**close at hand**', that is, is nearby.[317] The well awakened (yogi), having contemplated that there at each (of these) occasions, penetrates (into it), whereas the unawakened (yogi) is deluded. This (meditation) is *śāmbhavī*.[318]

Discussion

According to Swamijī, this is *Śāmbhavopāya*. The reason for that is that we experience emotions deeply within consciousness. Although quite clear and some very intense, they are in the domain of conception. They are not identified, as objects are, by means of a process of mental assessment. An emotion is felt deeply within the perceiving consciousness. We commonly say: "I am happy" or "I am sad" when perceiving our emotive state. We do not say "I am the table" when we perceive a table. This is because we perceive it as outside ourselves. A large part of the practice of the cognitive Yoga of the *Vijñānabhairava* is to align that outer experience with an inner one. The common external perception of a table is "this is a table." Recognized to be within the domain of perception, we perceive that "the table is part of the domain of objectivity shining within consciousness." Realizing that "I am the expanse of consciousness" at the innermost stage of perception, we realize that everything that appears, appears within me and is part of me. In this perspective, we experience that "I am the table" just as I am all that is perceived along with the cognitive consciousness and the perceiver that perceives it.

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[317] Here, wittingly or unwittingly, Śivopādhyāya integrates the quietism of the *Vijñānabhairava*—'the Being of the Brahman' with the radiant dynamic stillness—'radiant pulse'—of the Pratyabhijñā. The latter has adopted it from the Spanda teachings by integrating it into the luminous vision of the Process of ongoing Reality that the Pratyabhijñā identifies with reflective awareness—*vimarśa*—the dynamic polarity of the luminosity of the light of the perpetual 'appearing' (*ābhāsa*) of consciousness.

[318] This meditation unfolds directly within the domain of the *Śāmbhava* state, that is, within the expanse of Śiva consciousness as an immediate and direct experience of intense emotions unmediated by any conceptualization.

95) Meditation by means of recollection

वस्तुषु समर्यमाणेषु दृष्टे देशे मनस्त्यजेत् ।
स्वशरीरं निराधारं कृत्वा प्रसरति प्रभुः ॥ ११९ ॥

vastuṣu smaryamāṇeṣu dṛṣṭe deśe manas tyajet |
svaśarīraṃ nirādhāraṃ kṛtvā prasarati prabhuḥ || 119 ||

(Remembering the past,) abandon the mind in a place (previously) seen amongst the things recalled. Having freed its own body of support (in this way), the Lord spreads forth (and reveals Himself). (119) (117)

Word-for-word meaning: (Remembering the past) *tyajet* abandon *manas* the mind *deśe* in a place *dṛṣṭe* (previously) seen *vastuṣu* amongst the things *smaryamāṇeṣu* recalled. *svaśarīraṃ nirādhāraṃ kṛtvā* Having freed its own body of support (in this way), *prabhuḥ* the Lord *prasarati* spreads forth (and reveals Himself).

Swamijī: 'Whenever ... something comes in your memory ... just focus your mind on that, that space and that time.... Your body, which is existing here, in this present cycle ... will remain without any basis because (the attention) has gone there, it has gone there in the past.... The fountain of God consciousness will appear at that moment.... This is *Śāktopāya* because you have to take the help of the body.'[319]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'**Abandon the mind.**' (This is done) by placing it in a concentrated state within the power of (direct) experience, which is its own support, on a place (once) seen, for example, by the power of recollection. (In this way,) one's own body manifests '**free of support**,' that is, disconnected (from the power of direct, present experience) like a snake (separated from its) sloth. Then, the Lord appears (spontaneously) by Himself. This is the settled (commonly accepted)

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[319] This meditation belongs to *Śāktopāya* because it deals with thought—in this case, in the form of recollection. Memory is necessarily associated with the body but it is not the object of meditation in this case. If it were to be more than incidentally associated with the main focus of this essentially mental practice, it would be *Āṇavopāya*, which is the category of psychophysical means.

teaching. The point here is (as follows). It is established (by sound reasoning) that the spread of consciousness (threads) through the memories brought about by (past) experience like a thread (through a) collection of jewels. Thus, (the yogi) should meditate on that. This is what remains (to be said to complete the meaning).

Śivopādhyāya

'**Abandon,**' that is, place '**the mind**' in those things that are being perceived by the cognition of recollection (*smṛtijñāna*) (of the sort) "this (is so)" "that (is so)," in the field of the cognition of experience (*anubhavajñāna*), which is its support. For recollection is preceded by (and based on present) experience. Having made one's own body free of the support (of thought constructs in the present), the Lord, whose nature is (present, direct) experience and is the one perceiver that connects (perceptions together), '**spreads forth,**' that is, comes into being (*pradurbhavati*) within memory and (present, ongoing) experience as well as their objects.

96) Withdrawing the gaze

क्वचिद्वस्तुनि विन्यस्य शनैर्दृष्टिं निवर्तयेत् ।
तज्ज्ञानं चित्तसहितं देवि शून्यालयो भवेत् ॥ १२० ॥

kvacid vastuni vinyasya śanair dṛṣṭiṃ nivartayet |
tajjñānaṃ cittasahitaṃ devi śūnyālayo bhavet || 120 ||

Having placed the gaze somewhere (on some) object, slowly withdraw (it), along with the mind and the perception of it. (Then), O Goddess, one becomes the abode of the Void. (120) (118)

Word-for-word meaning: *vinyasya* Having placed *dṛṣṭiṃ* the gaze *kvacid* somewhere *vastuni* (on some) object, *śanair* (and then) slowly *nivartayet* withdraw (it), *cittasahitaṃ* along with the mind *tajjñānaṃ* and the perception of it. *devi* (Then), O Goddess, *bhavet* one becomes *śūnyālayo* the abode of the Void.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having directed the gaze somewhere, (one has) the experience of that entity (such as) "this is a jar." Having placed that, along with (the thought construct

which is) its latent trace, within the mind (*citta*), the mind becomes empty. The meaning is that the Brahman is attained.

Śivopādhyāya

Having cast (one's) gaze, in the form of the sense organ (of sight), onto some object means (simply) 'having seen something.' Slowly withdraw the perception of that entity along with the intention (*saṃkalpa*), which has that as its object, by contemplating (its essential) emptiness (*śūnyabhāvanā*). Or else (view it) practicing the teaching that 'sight is (directed) outwards, (whereas) the goal is within.' It is by that (practice) alone (that he finds his) abode (*ālaya*) in the Void (of God consciousness). He who possesses (this state of) rest is this kind of (yogi) who restrains his senses. Another reading (found in some manuscripts is) *devi śūnyalayo bhavet*—'O Goddess, he should merge into the Void'.

97) Devotion develops into the insight that is Śiva's power

भक्त्युद्रेकाद्विरक्तस्य यादृशी जायते मतिः ॥
सा शक्तिः शांकरी नित्यं भावयेत्तां ततः शिवः ॥ १२१ ॥

bhaktyudrekād viraktasya yādṛśī jāyate matiḥ ||
sā śaktiḥ śāṃkarī nityaṃ bhāvayet tāṃ tataḥ Śivaḥ || 121 ||

The kind of intuitive insight (*mati*) that arises in one who is detached (from the world) by virtue of (his) intense devotion, is Śaṅkara's power. Contemplate (*bhāvayet*) her constantly (and) thus (become) Śiva. (121) (119)

Word-for-word meaning: *yādṛśī* The kind of *matiḥ* intuitive insight *jāyate* that arises *viraktasya* in one who is detached (from the world) *bhaktyudrekād* by virtue of (his) intense devotion, *sā śāṃkarī* she is Śaṅkara's *śaktiḥ* power. *bhāvayet* Contemplate *tāṃ* her *nityaṃ* constantly *tataḥ* (and) thus *Śivaḥ* (become) Śiva.

Swamijī: When there is intensity of love for God, ... you won't recognize anything in this world.... When detachment arises in your mind ... the intellect is transformed into the energy of God consciousness, and you should perceive that this energy is the real energy. This is *Śāmbhavopāya*.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'The kind of intuitive insight (*mati*)' of 'one who is detached' by virtue (of his) exceeding devotion and whose mind is tranquil by contemplating consciousness within (his) mind (*citta*), is praised as 'Śaṅkara's power.' Thus, he should contemplate her by virtue of which, he becomes of that same nature.

Śivopādhyāya

Devotion has been defined (as follows):

'Devotion is not falling at the feet of the all-pervasive Supreme Lord. The devotion of those whose nature is deep feeling (*bhāva*) is the contemplation of onenėss with Him.'

'**Intense**' means very much more (or excessive).

98) Meditation on the Emptiness of Absence

वस्त्वन्तरे वेद्यमाने शनैर्वस्तुषु शून्यता।
तामेव मनसा ध्यात्वा विदितोऽपि प्रशाम्यति ॥ १२२ ॥

vastvantare vedyamāne śanair vastuṣu śūnyatā |
tām eva manasā dhyātvā vidito'pi praśāmyati || 122 ||

(After an object has been perceived), when (the pure consciousness) within an object is being perceived, gradually the emptiness (of pure consciousness is experienced) within (all other) things (as the emptiness of their absence). Having contemplated that (emptiness) itself with the mind (free of thought), one becomes tranquil, even if (the object) is (still) perceived. (122) (120)

Word-for-word meaning: *vastvantare* (After an object has been perceived,) when (the pure consciousness) within an object *vedyamāne* is being perceived, *śanair* gradually *śūnyatā* the emptiness (of pure consciousness is experienced) *vastuṣu* within (all other) things (as the emptiness of their absence). *dhyātvā* Having contemplated *tām* that (emptiness) *eva* itself *manasā* with the mind (free of thought), *praśāmyati* one becomes tranquil, *vidito'pi* even if (the object is still) perceived.

Swamijī: *'At the time of perceiving this present object, don't perceive this present object; go to another object you have perceived already before that....*

You won't perceive anything. All objects will melt into nothingness, by and by. Through your mind, focus on that nothingness, how all these objects are dissolved in nothingness in the end.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The intended sense here is as follows. When one thing is known to be consciousness and the notion that it is absent elsewhere (concomitant with it, together make up), all this universe, which is perceived to (possess just that) one nature.[320] Thus, because even if just one thing (is known to be) of the nature of consciousness, one consequently realizes the nature of everything. Having in this way, that is, in a state devoid of intention and conception, meditated on the emptiness of all objects of perception as void of (diversity and) variety (*vicitratā*), one is liberated. This is certain.

Śivopādhyāya

When any one thing is being perceived, (the yogi) should meditate on the emptiness within all the objects of perception, other than that, whether they be internal or external, as well as those that are not being perceived.[321] Emptiness is the absence of (their) manifestation at that time. '**Having contemplated,**' that is, reflected on that emptiness, which is the light of consciousness, as the non-existence of objects of perception '**with the mind,**' that is, with consciousness devoid of thought constructs, '**one becomes tranquil, even if (the object) is (still) perceived,**' that is, even by the sensory awareness (*vedana*) (of it).[322] (The meaning is that his) nature becomes that of the tranquil Brahman (at rest within itself).

The word '*vidi*' (in the expression *vidito'pi*: 'even if (the object) is (still) perceived') that ends with the letter 'i' denotes the (kind of) knowledge (*jñāna*), which is the perception of (the duality of) relative distinctions (*bhedapathā*). That knowledge, relating to (any one) entity present anywhere, is the experi-

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[320] Implicit in the perception of any one thing is the concomitant perception of its absence everywhere else. Thus, the perception of any one thing entails the perception of all things which is the 'one nature' of all things.

[321] Read *vastuṣvavedyamāneṣvapi* for *vastuṣu vedyamāneṣv api*.

[322] Here is another example of meditation on absence or non-existence as the Void.

ence of that entity. It is associated with the mind and the latent traces of that (perception, which remain after it has taken place). Here it is taught that, having perceived just one thing, after that, the intention, knowledge and the rest in relation to that object come to an end. However, there is a difference (*viśeṣa*) here (with this practice), namely that, after knowing an entity which is an object of perception, the tranquillity (of repose in emptiness is realized) by contemplating the emptiness of all the objects of knowledge that can be known and so too by the sensory awareness of it (*tadvedanāt*).[323]

iha punarvedyamānavastujñānāntaraṁ sarvavedyeṣvapi jñāyamāneṣu śūnyatābhāvanayā tadvedanādapi praśāntilakṣaṇo viśeṣaḥ || 122 ||

atra nāthaḥ samācāraṁ paṭale.aṣṭādaśe.abhyadhāt |
nātra śuddhirna cāśuddhirna bhakṣyādivicāraṇam ||

99) Nothing is pure or impure, enjoined or prohibited

Here (in this regard), the Lord has taught virtuous conduct (grounded in the transcendence of opposites) (*samācāra*)[324] in the eighteenth chapter (of the *Mālinīvijayatantra*) (where it is said that)[325] here (in the practice of this Tan-

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[323] The emptiness of all objects of knowledge meant here is their absence in the course of perceiving any one thing. The one object continues to be perceived and so is part of consciousness no less (or more) than all other things that are not.

[324] Monier-Williams defines the word *samācāra* as follows: 'equal manners or customs, equal or virtuous conduct *ib. mfn.* equal or similar in practice or in virtuous conduct *ib. m.* procedure, practice, conduct, custom, usage, usual way or method.' We can understand the technical sense of the term from the context to be 'behaving equally with respect to the opposites.' Concretely, what this means is, for example, viewing what is commonly considered to be pure and impure as a false distinction, and acting accordingly. A Brahmin who behaves this way may freely embrace an untouchable, or eat food such as meat, that is normally considered to be impure. Clearly, if he did that for any other reason, he would be seriously transgressing.

[325] The previous meditation was grounded in the perception of the ultimate opposites–existence and non-existence. Just as that dichotomy is denied there, so is the one between 'pure and 'impure' in the meditation that follows here just after it. Śivopādhyāya introduces it by quoting the following passage from the *Tantrāloka*, which is drawn from the *Mālinīvijayottara*.

tra), there is neither purity nor impurity, nor deliberation on what may (or may not) be eaten, (drunk, touched) or the like. There is neither duality nor non-duality. There is no worship of the Liṅga or the like, neither its abandonment. There is neither the rule of owning nothing, nor its opposite. (Such practices as having) matted hair, (smearing the body) with ashes and the like are neither rejected (nor enjoined). Such is also the case with the observance or otherwise of (the ascetic's) Vows and the like. Entry into the sacred meeting grounds (*kṣetra*) and the like, the observance of the Rule etc., (the distinction between) one's own and others' icons (*rūpa*), sectarian insignia (*liṅga*), (initiatory) names and clans (*gotra*) or the like—none are either prescribed or prohibited in this (Tantra).[326]

Everything (may be) prescribed or else, prohibited here (in this scripture). However, O queen of the gods, what is strictly enjoined here is that the yogi who exerts himself well (and vigorously) should fix his mind firmly on (ultimate) reality. In whatever way (that is conducive) to that, so should he practice. Even while he is engaged in enjoying the objects of the senses (*bhuñjāno viṣayān api*), he, whose mind does not waver from reality, is untouched by (their) defects, just as a lotus petal is (unaffected) by water. He who is armed with the Mantras etc., that counter poison, even if he ingests it, it does not make him lose his senses. Such is a yogi of great wisdom.'[327]

For this yogi:

'What is considered fit or unfit to drink (because it is pure or otherwise) is (all equally the element) Water. What is (considered pure and so) fit to be eaten or (is considered to be impure and so) not fit to be eaten is (all equally) made of (the element) Earth. All (that is visible), whether beautiful or ugly, is (equally) said to be Fire.[328]

The Brahman who is equal (in all that is considered to be pure and impure) is devoid of defects. That is clearly evident and should be practiced constantly.[329] He who is armed with the Mantras etc., that counter poison, even if

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[326] TĀ 4/213–217ab.

[327] TĀ 4/217cd-220ab. TĀ 4/4/213cd-220ab is a literal quote of MV 18/74–80.

[328] *Sarvavīra* quoted in TĀv ad 12/24cd and in PTv p. 236 where the source is said to be the *Sarvācāra*.

[329] Source unknown.

he ingests it, it does not make him lose his senses. Such is a yogi who possesses great wisdom.[330]

Indeed, how can the body and the rest that consists of the five gross elements be impure? How can purity and impurity (be an intrinsic attribute) of an entity, independent of its manifest nature (*prakāśatā*) (which it derives from consciousness)?'[331]

Having abandoned the notion of 'pure' and 'impure' and adhered (to the exercise of) the reflective awareness of consciousness alone, in accord with the code of conduct (*nīti*) taught in the secret scriptures (*rahasyaśāstra*), he says:

किंचिज्ज्ञैर्या स्मृता शुद्धिः साऽशुद्धिः शंभुदर्शने ।
न शुचिर्ह्यशुचिस्तस्मान्निर्विकल्पः सुखी भवेत् ॥ १२३ ॥

kiṃcijjñair yā smṛtā śuddhiḥ sā'śuddhiḥ śaṃbhudarśane |
na śucir hy aśucis tasmān nirvikalpaḥ sukhī bhavet || 123 ||

That, which (people) with little understanding consider to be purity (*śuddhi*), is not purity according to the Śaiva teachings. There is neither clean (*śuci*) nor unclean. Therefore, one who is free of (such dichotomizing) notions is happy (and blissful). (123) (121)

Word-for-word meaning: *yā* That which *kiṃcijjñair* (people) with little understanding *smṛtā* consider (to be) *śuddhiḥ* purity, *sāśuddhiḥ* that is not purity *śaṃbhudarśane* according to the Śaiva teachings. (There is) *na* neither *śucir* clean *hy aśucis* (nor) unclean. *tasmāt* Therefore, *nirvikalpaḥ* one who is free of (such dichotomizing) notions *sukhī bhavet* is happy (and blissful).

Swamijī: This is *Śāktopāya*.[332]

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[330] MV 18/81 = TĀ 4/200cd-201ab.

[331] TĀ 4/221cd-222ab.

[332] 'Pure' and 'impure' are just notions, they are not inherent qualities of any object. The Empowered Means is concerned with the purification of thought, that is, aligning it with reality. Chapter four of the *Tantrāloka* is particularly concerned with this category of practice. Accordingly, the passage Śivopādhyāya has quoted takes pride of place as the conclusion of that chapter. In other words, Abhinava chooses to present freedom from this dichotomy of purity and its opposite as the acme of this category of practice.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

According to those who know the Law (*dharmaśāstra*), (the process of) purification is taught in such (passages as): 'Having cleaned the feet sufficiently, he should sip pure water three times.' (However), this (kind of) purity for one who is immersed in contemplative absorption (*samādhi*) free of thought constructs is not purity, nor is it, impurity because (he has) realized non-duality (*abheda*). This is the supreme truth (*paramārthà*) of what is supremely real. And that same thing is said (in the Law books also) in such (passages as):

'Whether he abandons the body (and dies) in Kāśī or in the house of an outcaste, the one who knows that, is not stained (thereby), as (is not) gold[333] in mud.'

Śivopādhyāya

'People with little understanding' are those who know the Law (*dharmaśāstra*) (but nothing else). (According to them), the state of purity is the purification brought about with mud and water etc. (However), **'according to the Śaiva teachings,'** which is the direct experience of the Supreme Lord's real nature, (washing) is not purifying, (indeed it is itself) just (another form of) impurity for the reason that is about to be explained.

Or else (one may understand that) **'the Śaiva teachings'** are scriptures uttered by the Supreme Lord. However, the purity (taught there is) not purity—it is not a state devoid of impurity (*nairmalya*) because the specification (of it, in this sense here), is based predominantly on (an individual's) state of being (*bhāva*) (not on the intrinsic nature of an entity). The purity taught in other texts (*śāstra*) is not purity; it is not a state of (spiritual) purity. Rather, on the contrary, it is **'certainly'** impurity. Or else, (taking) the reason for (the use of the word) 'certainly' (as a way to express) emphasis, (what is meant is that) it is just impurity (nothing else). This is because cleaning (an object) with mud or any other (detergent), with respect to knowledge of reality, has no function because (reality is) not (a physical) body. As our great teacher has said:

'Even though he has been completely cleaned with mud and water etc., the extroverted (worldly man) is not (thereby spiritually) pure (*pavitra*), just like a jar that is clean on the outside (but contains) urine within it.'

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[333] Correct *hema* to *hemaṃ*.

Having first mentioned (what is) '**not purity**,' he goes on to say again '**(nothing is) clean**' and then again, (that it is certainly) '**unclean.**' 'Impurity' is repeated in order to stress emphatically that (purity in this sense) has no function with respect to (the attainment of) the knowledge of reality. This is because cleansing with mud and the like is (just) an ancillary to ritual, (it makes no difference to the nature of things). May it (continue to be) competent in that (respect). As is said:

'A person who has not bathed is not fit to repeat Mantra or make offerings to the fire and the like (whereas) one who has bathed is competent in all cases (to attend and perform) the rites for the gods and the ancestors.'

(However), in some places (in the Law books and scriptures), it is said that that is not so. Thus, (we read there that):

'He is competent to (acquire spiritual) knowledge (only) if he has been purified with mud and water etc.'

If (an opponent objects that) purifying (one's self) with mud and the like is not an impediment (to attaining) knowledge of reality and so that may also be (done), (we reply that that is correct), let it be, because it is not an impediment to (the acquisition) of knowledge. However, (the acquisition of) knowledge does not depend (on observing such rules). (Liberating knowledge) is not like a ritual that depends on purity (for it to bear fruit). (Indeed, cleaning the body may be spiritually damaging). It is common knowledge that when the body etc., is cleaned with mud and other (detergents), even one who knows reality, when viewing the body (may) identify with it, seeing its beauty and similar (qualities) because, unmindful of (his spiritual) introverted state, the extroverted (worldly one) prevails. The condition of those who know (the true nature of things) should be that, by the repeated and intense exercise of the reflective awareness of consciousness, the body and the rest (of the psychophysical organism) is forgotten. That (yogi) never sees the body. As is said in the *Śrībhagavata*:

'The body is perishable. The accomplished yogi (*siddha*) does not observe whether it is engaged in some activity (*avasthita*) or is striving (*utthita*) (for something), for (*yataḥ*) he has known (his) own (true) nature.'

(An opponent may object), if cleaning with mud etc, does not aid (the attainment) of the knowledge of reality, how is it that the Lord has declared

that (a yogi should practice) 'reverence for (his) teacher, cleanliness, steadfastness and self-control?' (Now) if (you object that) cleanliness (*śaucya*) is (itself) knowledge of reality. (We reply that) that is true (to some extent). It is said in the *Skandapurāṇa* that (ritual) ablution is of seven kinds, namely, pertaining to 1) Mantra, 2) Earth, 3) Fire, 4) Wind, 5) Divine, 6) Varuṇa (Water) and 7) the Mind. (These are defined there in the passage) beginning with: '(the bath pertaining) to Mantra (takes place) when one is standing in water' and ending with '(the bath pertaining to) Varuṇa (involves) plunging (into water). The mental one is (performed by) thinking of Viṣṇu.'[334]

(An opponent may object): it is said that the main ablution, which is the fruit of all (the others), is the mental one. Thus, it is equal to (any) other (type of ablution), even just the one pertaining to Varuṇa alone. However, as that too is secondary, why can one not refer to the main ablution while thinking of Viṣṇu with the word 'purity.' (We disagree), it is not wise to accept a contrary prejudiced view. (An opponent may object that) the procedure concerning Varuṇa's (ablution) is taught in the Law books and so is also Dharma. (We reply that) alright! Then, by accepting that that is Dharma (let's say) that knowledge of reality is the Supreme Dharma and (as such) is much preferable to the Dharma of cleansing (the body) with mud and the like. As is said in Yājñavalkya's *smṛti* itself:

'Out of (all good) deeds, namely, reverence, (right) conduct, self-restraint, non-violence, charity and study, this is the most excellent *dharma*, namely, the vision of the Self (attained) by Yoga.'

There is something else (to say). If (one does not) purify (the body) with mud etc, it is no loss to the Supreme Soul because it is formless. (Moreover,) because (the Supreme Soul is formless), like the sky, even if it is done, it does not grow (or develop) at all. The body is cleaned with mud and the like, even so (it is the body) of a sullied (soul) and so it is said that what is declared in one *śāstra* (to be pure) is (considered to be) impure (in another one). Thus, even if one has not purified (oneself) with mud or the like but the mind is pure by virtue of the knowledge that is free of thought constructs, (then), free of the impurities of the mind, he is 'happy (and blissful)'.

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[334] *skandapurāṇe abhihitam*
āpo hi ṣṭheti vai māntraṃ----------| iti ārabhya
vāruṇaṃ cāvagāhyaṃ tu mānasaṃ viṣṇucintanam | iti paryante

100) Bhairava is omnipresent and known to all. Nothing exists apart from Him

सर्वत्र भैरवो भावः सामान्येष्वपि गोचरः ।
न च तद्व्यतिरेकेण परोऽस्तीत्यद्वया गतिः ॥ १२४ ॥

sarvatra bhairavo bhāvaḥ sāmānyeṣv api gocaraḥ |
na ca tadvyatirekeṇa paro'stīty advayā gatiḥ || 124 ||

Bhairava's Being is everywhere. It is in the field (of the understanding) of common folk also. (He, who knows that) nothing else exists apart from Him, (attains) the non-dual state. (124) (122)

Word-for-word meaning: *bhairavo* Bhairava's *bhāvaḥ* Being *sarvatra* (is) everywhere. *gocaraḥ* (It is in) the field (of the understanding) *sāmānyeṣv api* of common folk also. (He, who knows that) *na tadvyatirekeṇa paro'stīty* nothing else exists apart from him, (attains) *advayā* the non-dual *gatiḥ* state.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'Just as the variety (of things in) a town or a village manifest undivided within a mirror as well as divided off from one another and from the mirror, (so is it with all that appears within consciousness).'[335]

In this way, **'Bhairava's Being'** is **'everywhere'** all the time, clearly apparent within (all) external and internal things. Nothing at all exists apart from Him. By attaining this awakened insight, (the yogi attains) the state beyond duality and (possesses the) knowledge of non-duality. For if (things) were to exist apart from Him, the consequence would be that there would be no ongoing manifestation (*prakāśamānatva*) (of anything).

Śivopādhyāya

'Bhairava's Being,' is (His) true nature which is (that He is the universal) perceiver, not as the Buddhists (maintain as simply) the absence of objectivity. It is **'everywhere'** in all places. **'It is in the field (of the understanding) of common (folk)'** that is, it can also be grasped by common folk who are devoid of

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[335] *PS* 12.

discernment. This is because the reflective awareness that 'I am' (*ahaṃ-vimarśa*) of all perceivers, that is, the Fully Conditioned, the Deconditioned for Dissolution and the rest manifests clearly (as the experience they have that) "I know, I act" etc. (And that reflective awareness) is not something else apart from Bhairava. Such is the oneness of the reflective awareness that 'I am.' The nature of the Supreme Lord is "I am", and that (nature) is clearly evident (*prakaṭa*). There is no use of the three (categories of) practice, Individual and the rest (Bhairava's Being is always immediately attainable by those who have this insight). It is improper to search for a means (to know) that which is the most evident (of all). As is said:

'The network of means does not illumine Śiva. Does a jar illumine the sun? Discerning in this way, the man of noble vision enters in an instant Śiva, Who is His own Light.'[336]

So too (the same is said) in the *Saṃvitprakāśa* also:

'When Your true nature is directly visible and (You) abide clearly apparent in all respects, those who make use of means (to realization) certainly do not know You.'[337]

And (so too) in the *Mahārthamañjari*:

'He whom even fools know and so too waterbearers know well, he who is greeted with reverence (by all), to whom is that Kulanātha not clearly apparent?'

So too the Veda (declares):

'Him the cowherds and the bearers of water have seen, and Him all creatures have seen, may he be seen to be gracious to us.'[338]

Discussion

Swamijī says that this meditation is in *Śāktopāya*. This is because it involves cogitating on Bhairava's theological attributes. By purifying thought, that is,

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[336] Concluding verse of chapter 2 of the *Tantrasāra* concerning *anupāya*—'No Means'.

[337] SP 1/13 also quoted in TĀv ad 1/145 and ad 2/14.

[338] *Śrīrudram* first *anuvāka*, lines 15 and 16.

conforming it to reality in this way, the yogi becomes one with Bhairava and all that exists.

(Next,) he teaches the plane of Śakti:

101) Equality towards friend and foe, honour and dishonour

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च समो मानावमानयोः ।
ब्रह्मणः परिपूर्णत्वादिति ज्ञात्वा सुखी भवेत् ॥ १२५ ॥

samaḥ śatrau ca mitre ca samo mānāvamānayoḥ |
brahmaṇaḥ paripūrṇatvād iti jñātvā sukhī bhavet || 125 ||

(One who is) equal towards friend and foe (alike), the same when honoured or insulted, because the Brahman (which is his true nature is) full (and perfect), having known this, is (always) happy. (125) (123)

Word-for-word meaning: *samaḥ* (One who is) equal *mitre ca śatrau* (towards) friend and foe (alike), *samo* the same *mānāvamānayoḥ* when honoured or insulted, *brahmaṇaḥ paripūrṇatvād* because the Brahman (which is his true nature is) full (and perfect), *jñātvā* having known *iti* this, *bhavet* is (always) *sukhī* happy.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

As the Lord has sung (in the *Bhagavadgītā*):

'Those who are (truly) learned Brahmins view a Brahmin imbued with learning and humility, a cow and an elephant, a dog and an outcaste equally (as the same).'[339]

And the same is said in the *Śāntarasādinidarśana*:

'A snake or a necklace of pearls, a bed of flowers or (hard) stone, a jewel or iron, a powerful enemy or a friend, grass or a woman—may my days pass viewing (them all) as equal, be it during a battle, (or) in a forest (retreat) repeating 'Śiva! Śiva! Śiva!"

And again, in the *Siddhāntamuktāvali*:

'He has bathed in the waters of all the sacred bathing sites, he has given all the earth, offered a thousand sacrifices, libation has been offered to all the

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[339] BhGī 5/18.

gods, his ancestors have been pulled out of transmigratory existence, he too is worshipped by (all in) the three worlds who has attained stability of mind reflecting on the Brahman for even just a moment.'

Having known in this way, that the outpouring of will, knowledge and action which is the ongoing unfolding of all things is just consciousness (alone), 'is (always) happy.' This is the general sense (of this verse).

Śivopādhyāya

(Next), he teaches (the nature of) Śāmbhavī's plane:

Discussion

Swamijī says that this meditation is also in *Śāktopāya*. The reason for this is that it involves disciplining and thereby purifying thought to free it from the tension of attraction and aversion and the ups and downs of following people's opinions about oneself, whether they be respectful or otherwise.

102) The balance in the centre between aversion and attachment

न द्वेषं भावयेत्क्वापि न रागं भावयेत्क्वचित् ।
रागद्वेषविनिर्मुक्तौ मध्ये ब्रह्म प्रसर्पति ॥ १२६ ॥

na dveṣaṃ bhāvayet kvāpi na rāgaṃ bhāvayet kvacit |
rāgadveṣavinirmuktau madhye brahma prasarpati || 126 ||

One should neither cultivate (*bhāvayet*) aversion nor attachment in any circumstance. The Brahman extends in the centre (in between these extremes), which is free of attachment and hatred. (126) (124)

Word-for-word meaning: *na bhāvayet* One should neither cultivate *dveṣaṃ* aversion *na* nor *rāgaṃ* attachment *kvāpi* in any circumstance. *brahma* The Brahman *prasarpati* extends *madhye* in the centre (in between these extremes), *rāgadveṣavinirmuktau* which is free of attachment and hatred.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

When one's own true nature is attained, that is free of aversion for snakes and the like and attachment to, for example, (precious) necklaces, the Brahman is realized. This is the (overall) sense.

Śivopādhyāya

'Extends' (*prasarpati*) means 'unfolds' (*vikasati*).

103) Meditation on Absence and Transcendence

यदवेद्यं यदग्राह्यं यच्छून्यं यदभावगम् ।
तत्सर्वं भैरवं भाव्यं तदन्ते बोधसंभवः ॥ १२७ ॥

yad avedyaṃ yad agrāhyaṃ yac chūnyaṃ yad abhāvagam |
tat sarvaṃ bhairavaṃ bhāvyaṃ tadante bodhasaṃbhavaḥ || 127 ||

That which is not an object of knowledge, that cannot be grasped, that is Void and is present in the absence (of things) (*abhāvaga*), should all be contemplated (*bhāvya*) as Bhairava. (Finally) at the end (and culmination) of that (meditation, the realized yogi experiences) the birth of (awakened) consciousness. (127) (125)

Word-for-word meaning: *yad* That which *avedyaṃ* is not an object of knowledge, *yad* that *agrāhyaṃ* cannot be grasped, *yac chūnyaṃ* that is Void *yad abhāvagam* and is present in the absence (of things), *tat sarvaṃ* all that *bhāvyaṃ* should be contemplated *bhairavaṃ* as Bhairava. *tadante* (Finally) at the end (and culmination) of that (meditation), *bodhasaṃbhavaḥ* (the realized yogi experiences) the birth of (awakened) consciousness.

Swamijī: 'The definition of *Śāmbhava* is just when you put your mind, when you meditate, on nothingness, absolute nothingness, that is the *Śāmbhava* state. When there is some object to be meditated upon, that will be *Śāktopāya* or *Āṇavopāya*. Here it is *Śāmbhavopāya*.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'From which words turn away along with the mind not having attained it, knowing the bliss of the Brahman, he fears not anywhere.[340]

The sun does not shine there, nor moon and stars, these flashes of lightning do not shine (there), what to say of this fire. Everything shines in accord with Its shining. Its light illumines all this.'[341]

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[340] *Taittirīyopaniṣad* 2/4/1
[341] *Kaṭhopaniṣad* 2/2/15

Indeed, these creatures are born from bliss and born by (that) bliss, they live. (When they die), they go to (that) bliss and enter into it.'[342]

It is established by such (declarations in the Upaniṣads), that all this is the Brahman alone. By the strength of the firm (and unwavering) experience (of this reality), knowing that Bhairava's essential nature is everywhere, (the adept) becomes Bhairava, that is, he attains the Brahman. This is the meaning.

Śivopādhyāya

'That which is not an object of knowledge' has no place on the plane of objectivity. It is the 'Void' that cannot be grasped. It is said to be (as follows):

'It is void of all supporting attributes and all realities without exception, all impediments and residual traces (of past experience), in reality it is not void.'[343]

For it is taught that:

'There is a certain (undefinable) state that cannot be known, which is said to be the emptiness of those who are like me. It is not (the voidness) that is the absence of all existence, that (understanding of the word) accords[344] with the convention (*rūḍhi*) of (the language common) folk (speak).'[345]

Thus, the voidness, which is the absence of perception of objectivity, that Buddhists consider to be Void, is different from the (Void) of the followers of the Krama school (Devīnaya).

That same (point) is suggested in the *Vimarśadīpikā* (where we read):

'That abode of the Void, free and completely full (of all that exists), is called Śiva. It is where (all) metaphysical principles (*tattva*) dissolve away and from whence they arise. The Lords of the principles are born from that

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[342] *Taittirīyopaniṣad* 3/6/1

[343] Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in the *Spandanirnaya* p. 27 saying that it is by Nāgārjuna.

[344] Another meaning of the expression *nāstikyārthānupātinī* is 'in accord with the teachings of Buddhism.'

[345] Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in the *Spandanirnaya* p. 28 saying that it is from the *Ālokamālā*.

and live there itself. They come to an end there in the Abode of the Void called Śiva. Other Voids that are perceived (to exist) by other philosophies, arise and dissolve away within Śiva's perpetually (manifest and) active (*sad-odita*) Void. Nothing exists that is not there, and what is not there, does not exist. Thus, nothing can possibly (exist), (whether) in an inner or outer form, apart from that. Nothing else is the goal to be achieved apart from the freedom (taught) in (this), the supreme (Krama) teaching (*naya*). (Refusing to) accept that, foolish Buddhists plunge into an emptiness (which is nothing at all).'

That Void is freedom, which in this way is **'present in the absence (of all things)'** (*abhāvagaṃ*). It is (present) in (non-existent) sky flowers as that which, bestowing the radiance of existence, is the great universal (common to all things existent and non-existent). For it is said that 'that pulsing effulgence is the Great Being, unspecified by location and time.'[346] (Again) 'we bow to the Supreme Lord's nature which is the universal (reality common to) all (things).'[347] (In accord with this) teaching, that 'should be contemplated (*bhāvya*) as Bhairava,' who is the true nature of all things. (In other words), one should contemplate (all things) as being Bhairava. By the excellence of that contemplation (*bhāvanā*), at (its) culmination, the true (*samyak*) (state of awakened) consciousness comes about.

The venerable Maheśvarānanda has elucidated the true nature of (what is meant by the term) the Great Being (*mahāsattā*) (in the following verse).

'What is the difference in the essential being of (an imagined) flower in the sky (which is a manifestation of consciousness), and a (real) flower (which is also such)? (There is none.) The world is given life by the pulsing radiance (of consciousness) and (that) pulsing radiance is common (universally) to all (things, whether existent or imaginary).'[348]

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[346] ĪP 1/5/14.

[347] StCi 6cd. The first line reads: *bhinneṣv api na bhinnaṁ yacchinneṣv acchinnam eva ca* | 'Also amongst (phenomena) that are (all) different (and separate from one another), it is undivided and amongst (those things that are limited and) conditioned, it is unconditioned.'

[348] MM v 32. Maheśvarānanda argues that what exists is what manifests. In this sense, an imaginary flower in the sky that appears in my imagination is not essentially different from a real flower. Both are equally existent as manifestations of

(What is meant here by) 'essential being' is existence. Accordingly, that which differs (from that is) the absence of essential being, which is non-existence. Thus, what is (the difference) between the essential being of a flower in the sky and an existent flower? There is none at all (both are equally manifestations of consciousness within consciousness). This is the meaning. He states the reason here (for that), namely that (the world) is given life by the pulsing radiance (of consciousness that makes all things equally manifest in whatever way they appear to be).

Discussion

Every entity is absolutely unique. There is no other one the same. This means that all else that exists in any form at all is present in relation to it as an 'absence' and any one thing is the non-existence of everything else. Everything participates in this polarity. We have already come across a meditation on 'non-existence' in this sense above (see v. 122 (124)). From a temporal rather than a spatial perspective, we observe that every event is unique. Recollection of past events empties out the present of immediacy. It too becomes Empty (see ibid.) by the exercise of attention on 'non-being.'

This is one way of understanding 'non-being.' Another, less common one, is a characterization of the Absolute. I have explored this rare concept in an earlier publication to which the reader is referred.[349]

104) The movement from outer space to the Void of consciousness

नित्ये निराश्रये शून्ये व्यापके कलनोज्झिते ।
बाह्याकाशे मनः कृत्वा निराकाशं समाविशेत् ॥ १२८ ॥

nitye nirāśraye śūnye vyāpake kalanojjhite |
bāhyākāśe manaḥ kṛtvā nirākāśaṃ samāviśet || 128 ||

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consciousness that appear within it, at one with it, as its 'pulsing radiance.' Maheśvarānanda argues that if we don't accept that, neither the imagined sky flower would appear in our imagination, nor indeed, would the real one to the senses. Both would be equally unmanifest.

349 See Dyczkowski 2004: 51–64 'Abhāvavāda. The Doctrine of Non-being. A forgotten Śaiva Doctrine.'

Once the mind has been fixed on an external space, which is permanent, without support, empty, pervasive, and without a cause (*kalanojjhita*),[350] it enters (and is absorbed into the transcendent) absence of space (which is continuous, uninterrupted consciousness). (128) (126)

Word-for-word meaning: *manaḥ kṛtvā* Once the mind has been fixed *bāhyākāśe* in external space, *nitye* which is permanent, *nirāśraye* without support, *śūnye* empty, *vyāpake* pervasive, *kalanojjhite* without a cause, *samāviśet* one enters *nirākāśaṃ* (and is absorbed into the transcendent) absence of space (which is continuous, uninterrupted consciousness).

Swamijī: 'You begin in *Śāktopāya* and end in the *Śāmbhava* state.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The sense is that in this (same) way, by virtue of the excellence of the meditation on the emptiness of 'external space' that has been experienced to be permanent and pervasive, that is, by virtue of the excellence of that practice, he enters there itself into the Abode which is the Void (of consciousness) beyond the Void (of the illusory universe) (*śūnyātiśūnya*).

Śivopādhyāya

The external sky is pervasive and possesses the attributes of permanence and the rest specified as belonging to it. '**The mind that has been fixed**' is perception (*jñāna*) which is the reflective awareness (of consciousness). (Once it has been fixed means) once it has been perfected (*samāpanna*) (in the practice of concentration). As consciousness, unsupported (by objectivity), dawns (by virtue of this practice), (the adept) enters the Abode which is not the Void (of illusion) that has come forth from the (outer) sky. This is the *Śākta* (state).[351]

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[350] *Kalanojjhite*, which I translate as 'without cause,' is explained by Swamijī to mean that 'there is nothing to be perceived in that, in this *ākāśa*.' The term *kalana* more commonly denotes the manner creation or manifestation takes places as a creative process of differentiation. That process is the cause of all things insofar as every single thing emerges as an effect by a process of differentiation from its cause.

[351] Śivopādhyāya says that this meditation is the Empowered (*Śākta*) state. Swamijī quite rightly corrects him by adding that this is its starting point but finds

105) The Disappearance of the Wondering Mind

यत्र यत्र मनो याति तत्तत्तेनैव तत्क्षणम् ।
परित्यज्यानवस्थित्या निस्तरङ्गस्ततो भवेत् ॥ १२९ ॥

yatra yatra mano yāti tat tat tenaiva tatkṣaṇam |
parityajyānavasthityā nistaraṅgas tato bhavet || 129 ||

Wherever the mind moves, having by that (very mind) at that (very) moment abandoned whatever (it moves to), it has no fixed place and so (left without support), one becomes free of (its) fluctuations.[352] (129) (127)

Word-for-word meaning: *yatra yatra* Wherever *mano* the mind *yāti* moves, *tenaiva* (having) by that (very mind) *tatkṣaṇam* at that (very) moment *parityajya* abandoned *tat tat* whatever (it moves to), *anavasthityā* it has no fixed place *tato* (and) so (left without support), *bhavet* one becomes *nistaraṅgas* free of (its) fluctuations.

Swamijī: Wherever the mind moves, push it to another object. Just disperse it. Just don't let it remain at one point.... You have to leave your mind free, but follow your mind.... If it goes to one point, just don't allow it to function there. Tell it to go somewhere else .... so it will remain without any support.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The sense is that having '**abandoned**' at that moment all that the mind, in the form of sensory awareness (*saṃvedana*) devoid of thought constructs (per-

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completion in the *Śāmbhava* state and its corresponding practice. This is because it begins with the cultivation of a pure cognitive state by the fluctuation of thought, which is an empowered means and it attains fruition in the unconditioned, expanse of pure consciousness of the Śāmbhava state.

[352] Abhinava explains that the spiritual power, that sacred places are felt to possess, is because they induce an expansion of consciousness. It is because of this that the place is sacred, as is one in which the sacrificial rites and worship of the deity take place. Thus, he says:

'The inner (spiritual) wealth of the sacrifice (*yāgaśrī*) becomes well established there in whatever outer (sacred) place the lotus of the heart blooms (*vikāsa*).' TĀ 15/107cd-108ab.

Jayaratha quotes this meditation from the *Vijñānabhairava* in his commentary on TĀ 4/121cd-122ab to explain why this takes place.

ceives), by (the application of) the method (*yukti*) by which (the state of pure consciousness) free of (objective) support is attained, (the yogi comes to) possess Parabhairava's own nature.

Śivopādhyāya

Wherever be the object that the mind, due to its fickle nature moves to, once that has been '**abandoned**' at that very moment by that very mind, which is in the form of sensory awareness (*saṃvedana*) devoid of thought constructs, (the mind is stilled) if, having gone (there) again, it is withdrawn (from there) again (repeatedly). (This practice is) in accord with Patañjali's teaching (that declares) that 'that (flow of the river of the mind) is checked by both (dispassion and repeated practice).'[353] (Similarly, the Lord teaches in the *Bhagavadgītā*), 'O Arjuna! It is grasped by dispassion and practice.'[354]

(Thus), the checking of the fluctuations of the mind, that the Lord considers to be possible, (is achieved by maintaining) firm stability (in the observance of these) two, that is, dispassion and practice. It is by virtue of that (that the application of) the method (*yukti*) by which (the state of pure consciousness), free of (objective) support, is attained that (the yogi) enters into (and identifies with) Parabhairava. Moreover, it is said in the *Gītā*:

'For whatever (cause) the fickle (wavering) and unsteady mind wanders, having restrained it from that, subjugate it solely to the Self.'[355]

106) Meaning of Bhairava's name and its utterance

भिया सर्वं रवयति सर्वदो व्यापकोऽखिले ।
इति भैरवशब्दस्य संततोच्चारणाच्छिवः ॥ १३० ॥

bhiyā sarvaṃ ravayati sarvado vyāpako'khile |
iti bhairavaśabdasya santatoccāraṇāc chivaḥ || 130 ||

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[353] YSū 1/12

[354] BhGī 6/36cd. Kashmiri version. This verse is not found in the common edition of the *Gītā*.

[355] BhGī 6/26.

(Bhairava is so called) because (He) causes everything to resound (*ravayati*)[356] with (the cry of) fear.[357] He gives all things (*sar-*

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[356] This verse is quoted in TĀv ad 5/136cd-137ab (135cd-136ab). There it reads *racayati*—'deploys' for *ravayati*—'causes to resound.' The reading here is as we find it in the citation of this verse in TĀv ad 1/99cd (100cd). It is the most generally accepted one and so has been retained. However, when Jayaratha quotes this verse a second time, it appears that he accepts the former reading (i.e., 'deploys'). Given the large variety of meaningful variant readings of the *Vijñānabhairava* in the manuscripts, that may, well, have already existed in Jayaratha's time, it is not impossible that he accepted both readings.

[357] Jayaratha's citation of this verse reads *bhṛiyāt*—'because (He) fills' for *bhiyā*, 'with (the cry of) fear,' so there the first line means: '(Bhairava is so called) because (He) fills (*bhṛiyāt*) everything and causes it to resound (*ravayati*).' Śivopādhyāya reports the reading *bhayā*—'by means of the light.' The reading *bhṛiyāt*—'because (He) fills' is a popular one and appears to yield the most sense, so much so that one is tempted simply to emend the text here. There can be no doubt that the one Jayaratha quotes is an early one. Indeed, even though it is not strictly etymologically correct, the perception of Bhairava as the sustainer of everything is widely prevalent. Thus, Abhinava begins his series of etymologies with that one and refers to it in the PTv (p. 63) where he writes: 'Bhairava's nature is to fill (and nourish) and He is the sound (*rava*) of the great Mantra.' In his *Prabodhapañcadaśikā* (verse 4), he says that:

> 'He is the God Bhairava whose characteristic is to fill (and nourish) (*bharaṇa*) the universe and by whose power the totality (of all things) is reflected in the mirror of his own nature.'

Accordingly, Abhinava accepts the reading '*bhṛiyāt*' ('may he fill') in his quotation of this verse in the ĪPVv (vol. 2 p. 214). Moreover, when Jayaratha quotes this same verse for a second time in TĀv ad 5/136cd-137ab (135cd-136ab), we find the same reading. Jayaratha's introduction to this verse here removes any doubt that this is the reading Jayaratha had before him. The unanimity of the manuscripts of his commentary further confirms it.

We observe that the etymologies of the word Bhairava are very varied. According to Śivopādhyāya, the most popular is that of 'filling' (*bharaṇa*), 'resounding' (*ravaṇa*) and 'emitting' (*vamana*). Indeed, Kṣemarāja says that these three activities characterize Bhairava's nature most specifically. But even so, Abhinavagupta does not present the third meaning. The Kubjikā Tantras supply yet another variant that is a didactic (*nirvacana*) rather than a strictly philological etymology. There, Bhairava's name is derived from three roots, namely, *bhṛ*, *ram* and *vam* in

vada)[358] and He pervades (*vyāpaka*) within everything. Thus, by uttering the word 'Bhairava' at length, (one becomes) Śiva. (130) (128)

Word-for-word meaning: (Bhairava is so called because) *sarvaṃ ravayati* He causes everything to resound *bhiyā* with (the cry of) fear. *sarvado* He gives all things. *vyāpako'khile* He pervades within everything. *iti* Thus, *santatoccāraṇāc* by uttering at length *bhairavaśabdasya* the word 'Bhairava' *chivaḥ* (one becomes) Śiva.

Swamijī 'When you scream in fear, God is there. It is with the intensity of fear that you cry out to the Lord to protect you. You want His support. If God is there, you are protected. You have to focus your mind on the meaning of Bhairava. You have to scream before the Lord, not before anybody else. The fear has to be extreme, the torture has to be intense.... 'Bhairava' means when you are afraid and scream, He is there. [He pervades] means He is all-pervading. He is there. When you want to explain [i.e. experience] this state of Bhairava, recite the word Bhairava in continuity, and you will become Bhairava. When you yourself become Bhairava, what fear is there?'[359]

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the sense of sustaining, sporting and emitting, respectively. We read in the *Śrīmatottara* (1/115–116):

'What is Bhairava? Bhairava is the one whose nature is to sustain (*bharaṇa*), sport (*ramaṇa*) and emit (*vamana*). He fills (*bharati*) with nectar, sports (*ramate*) with (his own) energy and emits (*vamate*) the essence of knowledge. Thus, he is called Bhairava. He is called Bhairava because the entire universe is pervaded (*vyāpita* by him) and he is the one who sports (*ramate*) in the Supreme Sky and emits (*vamate*) the pervasion of (the energy) that moves in the Void (of consciousness) (*Khecarī*).'

Similarly, 'Bhairavī is Śakti. She is called Bhairavī because (she is Bhairava's power) to wander (*bhramaṇa*), sport (*ramaṇa*) and emit (*vamana*).' Commentary on line 17 of the *Mālinīstava* in chapter four of the *Kumārikākhaṇḍa*. Dyczkowski 2009: vol 5 p. 234.

[358] The printed edition of the version of this verse commented by Śivopādhyāya reads *sarvago*—'present everywhere' for *sarvado*—'gives all things.' Clearly, the former reading is redundant and is supported only by MS Ñ of the TĀ, whereas the latter reading is found both here and the second time Jayaratha quotes this verse.

[359] 2002: 154–155.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

He causes all this universe 'to resound', that is, ponder out of fear (*bhiyā*). Or else (Bhairava is so called because) he protects (*avati*) (his devotee) by the awareness (he induces within him that) "I am all (this) mass of perceivables, that is, blue and (all else that is) not blue (as well as) pleasure and (all else that is experienced mentally that is) not pleasant." In this way, one attains Śiva by achieving stability in the experience that "I am everywhere (both) internally and externally." Similarly, it is taught (in the *Stanzas on Vibration*), for example, that there is no state that is not Śiva.[360]

Śivopādhyāya

The meaning of the four phonemes BHĀ AI RA and VA is as follows. The letter A is Anuttara (the Absolute). The letter I is Icchā (the will). (The letter Ā) is Ānanda (bliss), which is repose in the Absolute (A). Repose in the will (*icchā*–I) is Īśana (lordship). Thus, this, the beginning of the power of action, is the letter Ā and the letter Ī. BHĀ is the Light which is consciousness. Will and Lordship are in the body of Bliss. If they enter into the abode of the Absolute (A) that precedes them and does not fall from its own nature, then A Ā I and Ī (combined) become the letter E. The letter E arises by the flow of the Absolute (A) and Bliss (Ā) into the Will (I). So too, there the letter AI arises by uniting (E) again with the Absolute (A) and Bliss (Ā). Accordingly, the letters E and AI are called diphthongs (because they are produced by the union of vowels). Thus, the letter A (placed) in (the letter) I makes E.[361] By placing the letters A and E (together) in one place or the letters Ā and E, (the result is) AI, which is the light of consciousness that has been variegated (by its countless manifestations). That is this power of action (that has become) clearly apparent. The letter AI denotes a state in which (consciousness) possesses (its most) clearly apparent power of action (actualized in its universal activity).[362] Accordingly, it is said in the *Ekākṣarakośa* that 'the letter AI is Maheśvara.'

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[360] Ānandabhaṭṭa is alluding here to SpKā verse 29.

[361] *Kalāpavyākaraṇa*.

[362] The diphthong AI of the name 'Bhairava' denotes 'the clearly evident (i.e., active) power of action' of which Bhairava is the possessor and by virtue of which He is Śiva.

Thus, this is the meaning of the word 'Bhairava.' Bhairava is the letter AI, which is Maheśvara, the possessor of the power of action, who causes everything to resound (with a cry of) fear, that is, he reflects (*vimṛśati*) (on his own nature) which is the light of consciousness. This is (the meaning) of the name 'Bhairava.'

Or else (another explanation is that) fear, which is the power of knowledge, reflects on everything with the letter AI, which is the power of action that manifests (Maheśvara's) great (sovereign) lordship.

As is said in the Pratyabhijñā:

'The grounding of (all) insentient things is their foundation which gives (them) life and is considered to be the life of living beings.'[363]

He states another meaning (of the name) in the second quarter (of this verse where it says that Bhairava) 'gives all things and pervades within everything'. He gives (*rāti*) everything, (both) auspicious and inauspicious, by that fear. He impels (*vāti*) everything, that is, he is in consonance (with everything) (*anugacchati*) as the state of pervasion[364] (of His omnipresence). Thus, he is Bhairava. The Upaniṣad declares: 'Impelled by the Lord, one goes to heaven or else to hell.' By uttering (Bhairava's name) day and night (with each exhalation and inhalation), one becomes Paramaśiva.

The venerable Abhinavagupta has taught the greatness of the utterance (of Bhairava's name in the following verse):

'I bow (with reverence) within my very (*eva*) Self to (Bhairava's) name, (my body) covered with hairs standing on end like rows of sprouts (as I do so). I know that although (my body is) most tiny (*anīyasī*), by my repeating 'Bhairava' 'Bhairava,' it blocks the directions with (great) force (protecting me from evil influences). Breaking the burden of the cage of the fetters of the perishable fettered soul by bursting apart the knot of the Heart, the body also becomes infinite.'[365]

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[363] ĪP 1/1/4.

[364] *sarvaṃ vāti anugacchati vyāpakatayā.*

[365] This verse is found in ĪPVv 2, p. 137. Read, as there, *kiñcid aṇīyasīr* for *kiṃ ca davīyasīr*. Another meaningful variant found there that I have adopted is *truṭyatpāṭava*—'skilful in smashing' for *truṭyatpāśava*—'of the perishable fettered soul.'

Here (Abhinavagupta is talking about) the knowledge of extending (one's own Self) within one's own body, up to (its full) measure and power, by force to extremely distant quarters. (However), it is impossible for the cage of the fetters associated with the perishable fettered soul of one's own body to assume (the expansive state of) the Supreme Sky (of consciousness) unless it is immeasurable. Thus, it is said that 'even the body becomes infinite.'

One attains the supreme accomplishment (*parasiddhi*) by entering into a state of oneness with the Supreme Lord in the liberated state in this life by contemplating (*bhāvanā*) (its) oneness with all things. As I have said in praise (of the Self), 'I bow (with reverence) within my own Self alone.' This (teaching) has been explained by the venerable Abhinavagupta in the *Vivṛtivimarśinī* (quoted above). This is Karaṅkinīmudrā.[366]

According to Amara (the author of a famous lexicon, the words) 'endless,' 'the path of the gods' and 'sky' (are synonyms). We find a variant reading (for 'the body also becomes infinite') which says that 'even the body gives rise to liberation.'[367] There are some who read '(Bhairava is so-called) because He fills (*bhriyāt*) everything and causes (it) to resound (*ravayati*).'[368] That is not a sound (*sādhu*) (reading). It would make sense if one were to be establishing (the etymology) of the word '*bhṛrava*' or the like. Although this is the reading in many manuscripts, even so, (pray tell me) in relation to which of the letters

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[366] See above, commentary on v 70 concerning this *mudrā*.

[367] Śivopādhyāya notes the variant *mokṣāyate*—gives rise to liberation for *anantāyate*—'becomes infinite.' The variant is found in the version published in the ĪPVv.

[368] This is the reading of Jayaratha's citation of this verse in TĀv ad 5/135cd-136ab. The variants of this verse found in the manuscripts of the commentary are as follows:

bhriyāt [*j: bhriyās; ḍ: bhriyā*] *sarvaṃ ravayati* [*kh, ch, j: racayati; ḍ: ra *yati*] *sarvado* [*ñ: sarvago; ṭ, ḍ: sarvade*] *vyāpako 'khile* [*ḍ: vyāpakolikhe*] |

iti bhairavaśabdasya satatoccāraṇāc chivaḥ [*k: samantatoccāraṇāc chiva; ch, ḍ: satatoccaraṇāc chiva; j, jh, ṭ: -va; ñ: santatoccāraṇāc chiva*] ||

2) *bhriyāt sarvaṃ* [*jh: tri-*] *racayati* [*k: sarvaṃ ravayati; jh: ravayati*] *sarvado* [*ñ: sarvago*] *vyāpako 'khile* |

iti bhairavaśabdasya saṃtatoccāraṇāc chivaḥ [*ch, jh, ñ: satatoccāraṇāc chiva*] ||
VBh verse 130 (128)

(of the word Bhairava) would (the word) '*bharati*,' the meaning of which is 'sustaining and nourishing,' be applicable? Amongst the (phonemes) of the word 'Bhairava,' (the word) '*bharati*' is not related in this way to the phoneme BHAI nor to the phonemes RA or VA. (Even) assuming the view that (the phonemes are read) together, it is not sound (to derive the sense of) 'filling' etc. (*bharaṇa*) from the pair of phonemes 'BHA' and 'RA' and the meaning 'resound' (*ravaṇa*) from just the letter VA. It is not reasonable to apply the maxim of the 'eye of the crow' (i.e. that one thing can be applied to perform two functions) by first linking the first two phonemes together and then by again conjoining the phoneme RA, which was applied before, to the phoneme VA because then much thought would have to applied (to establish this etymology), hard as it is, to conceive (how that could be).

(Again, it is said that the word) Bhairava means 'filling' (*bharaṇa*), 'resounding' (*ravaṇa*) and 'emitting' (*vamana*). (But), although this is an old (traditional) meaning, it does not bear logical scrutiny because (the etymology of) the word 'Bhairava' is not (thereby) successfully established.[369] (According to this etymology), the phoneme AI (disappears like a) breeze blowing through a reed, as does the phoneme VA and (so) the word Bhairava is not successfully (derived).[370]

(Thus,) the second quarter (essentially) declares that the meaning is that of the two verbs 'to give' (*rāti*) and 'to pervade' (*vāti*). Kṣemarāja and others were not aware of this (derivation), for at the beginning of the laudatory verse of (Kṣemarāja's commentary called) the *Vijñānoddyota*, the (same) meaning (of the corresponding syllables of the name Bhairava) has been elucidated as 'filling' etc. Reflecting on the root meaning of this verse to be that Bhairava is He, who, 1) sustains, 2) nourishes, 3) bestows and 4) pervades all things, (we arrive at the following etymology according to Kṣemarāja).

1) Bhairava is he who bestows freedom from fear to those who are timorous. Again, 2) (Bhairava) is the God (*īśa*) of those who are radiant with the sound of fear and who is the cause of the cry of the fear (induced by) phenomenal (fettered) existence (*bhava*). 3) Time (*bhera*) impels and sets in

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[369] Read *bhairavapadasyaivam asiddhatvāt* for *bhairavapadasyaiva siddhatvāt*.

[370] If we derive the name Bhairava in this way, the vowel AI is not accounted for. Moreover, the letter VA appears twice—once in *ravaṇa*—'resounding' and again in *vamana*—'emitting'. One of these two VAs is in excess or, to put it another way, needs to disappear.

motion (*īrayati*) the stars (*bha*), that is, constellations. (Bhairava) causes that to pass (*vāyati*).[371]

This and the other (explanations he offers) are like the (circus) elephant who closes (his) eyes by (moving his) cheek with the objective of exhibiting (his) skill, which is nothing but his dexterity occasioned (by the movement of) his cheeks. The venerable teacher should (please) excuse (me if I say) that it is connoisseurs who are sensitive to beauty (*sahṛdaya*) who have the authority (in this case) to discern between the meaning (of a name) that has (depth and) substance and one without. One can learn the (symbolic) meaning of the conjunction of the four phonemes (of Bhairava's name) fabricated by people (not by Śiva, as is the case here), by (consulting) the teaching (with regard to this) expounded in the *Tantrāloka* and the *Tantrasāra*.

Discussion

Abhinava presents a detailed didactic etymology of Bhairava's name in his *Tantrāloka* (1/95–99ab (96–100ab)). According to the first etymology he presents there, Bhairava's name is derived from the roots '*bhṛ*', meaning to sustain and nourish, and '*ru*', to shout. These two roots, along with '*vam*', which literally means to vomit, and metaphorically 'to emit', are the ones that most com-

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[371] Śivopādhyāya is criticizing Kṣemarāja's etymology of the name Bhairava. The occasion for this is, as we have seen, the first auspicious verse (*maṅgalacaraṇa*) with which he begins his commentary. For the reader's convenience, here it is again:

bhīrūṇām abhayaprado bhavabhayākrandasya hetus tato
hṛddhāmni prathitaś ca bhīravarucām īśo 'ntakasyāntakaḥ |
bheraṃ[371] *vāyati yaḥ svayoginīvahas tasya prabhur bhairavo*
viśvasmin bharaṇādikṛd vijayate vijñānarūpaḥ paraḥ ||

He bestows freedom from fear to those who are fearful. He is the cause of the cry of the fear of transmigratory existence. Experienced in the abode of the heart, He is the Lord, the destroyer of death, of those who are in agony (made manifest by their) cry of fear. The Lord who transports time (causing it to pass) and is transported by his own Yoginīs, is Bhairava. He who, supreme in all this (universe), fills (sustains and withdraws all things) and whose nature is consciousness (*vijñāna*), is victorious.

Śivopādhyāya criticizes Kṣemarāja's etymology because it does not coincide with the one given here in the *Vijñānabhairava*.

monly appear in the less elaborate etymologies we find in the Tantras and commentaries. Examples are those here in this verse of the *Vijñānabhairava* (130 (128)) and in the Kubjikā Tantras. See Dyczkowski 2023 vol. 1 note 749 and notes 732–749 for an extensive treatment. See also TĀ 5/136cd-137ab and commentary. The series of etymologies Abhinava presents here are largely taken over by later teachers, including Kṣemarāja in his commentary on *Svacchandatantra* SvT 1/1–4ab. See Sanderson 2006: 62–63.

107) Cultivating subjectivity devoid of objective support

अहं ममेदमित्यादिप्रतिपत्तिप्रसङ्गतः ।
निराधारे मनो याति तद्ध्यानप्रेरणाच्छमी ॥ १३१ ॥

ahaṃ mamedam ityādipratipattiprasaṅgataḥ |
nirādhāre mano yāti taddhyānapreraṇāc chamī || 131 ||

In the course of ascertainments such as "I am", "this is mine" and the like, the mind enters (a state of subjectivity) devoid of (objective) support. Impelled (and inspired) by that meditation, one becomes peaceful. (131) (129)

Word-for-word meaning: *ityādipratipattiprasaṅgataḥ* In the course of ascertainments such as *ahaṃ* I am, *mamedam* this is mine, *mano* the mind *yāti* enters (a state of subjectivity) *nirādhāre* devoid of (objective) support. *taddhyānapreraṇāc* Impelled (and inspired) by that meditation, *chamī* one becomes peaceful.

Swamijī: This is *Śāktopāya* ending in *Śāmbhava* state. 'You have to remove personal I-ness from all these things: "this is mine; this is not mine. This is my money; this is not my money"—all these things.... if you induce your mind to do this kind of perceiving, you will get that appeased state of the blissful state of God consciousness.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The mind is first rendered devoid of (objective) support on such occasions as (when one ascertains that) "I am" "this is mine" and "by me". (Then) by the impulse (*preraṇa*) (that develops) by practicing **'that meditation'**, namely that "this plurality is nothing at all", by attaining the strength of self-awareness (*ahaṃvimarśa*), **'one becomes peaceful'**. One for whom duality is at rest, attains the extinction (of desire and the fettered state) (*nirvāṇa*). This is the meaning.

Śivopādhyāya

Even on the occasion when a cognition (issues from a) diminished subjectivity such as (the ascertainment that) "I am" and "this is mine", the mind enters into that reality (*vastu*) which is without (objective) support and is within the field (of the experience) of one who is well awakened, that is, (in a state of) full (undiminished) subjectivity (*pūrṇāhaṃbhāva*). This is because self-awareness (*ahaṃvimarśa*) is not destroyed and it is not specific (to any one perception). The nature of the Self, which is supreme bliss, never ceases (to be such) because the reflective awareness of full (undiminished) subjectivity (*pūrṇāhavimarśa*) as the Supreme Self exists everywhere.[372]

There is only one Self of all those who are not awake. Everybody is attached to himself. Love for one's own Self (*svātmaprema*) is, (in reality), reverence (*bhajana*) for the Supreme Lord. For it is said that just love (*prema*) is the Brahman alone (*kevala*). Self-awareness (*ahaṃvimarśa*) is not separated into diminished, full and the like. Bliss is (equally) the nature of one who is awake as it is of one who is not. Thus, the venerable Maheśvarānanda and others have said that the supreme (form of) love which has one's own Self as its object never diminishes, be it in knowledge or also in ignorance. As (he says):

'Surely, the Veda declares that what is beloved of the Self is loved by everybody. Therefore, the Self is blissful by nature whether it is liberated or bound.'[373]

"May I (never) not exist (rather) may I (always) exist", One sees (by this hope) the love for (one's own) Self. Thus, that is the supreme (reality) of and is the supreme state of the blissfulness of the Self.[374]

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[372] *pūrṇāhaṃvimarśasya paramātmatvena sarvatra sattvāt.*

[373] MM 55.

[374] This is inspired by a verse in the *Pañcadaśī*, which is a manual on the basic tenets of Advaita Vedānta written by Vidyāraṇya, who lived in the second half of the fourteenth century. The verse here reads:

mā na bhūvaṃ hi bhūyāsam iti premātmanīkṣyate |
atas tat paramaṃ tena paramānandatātmanaḥ ||

The verse in the *Pañcadāśī* reads:

mā na bhūyam ahaṁ kiṁ tu bhūyāsaṁ sarvadety asau |
āśīḥ sarvasya dṛṣṭeti pratyakṣā prītir ātmani || PD 12/31

'You alone, O Lord of the Self, are all things for everybody and are the one within them (*ātmani*) who possesses attachment (*rāgavat*). Thus, devotion for You is achieved (spontaneously, quite) naturally (*svabhāvasiddhā*). Knowing (this), a man triumphs.'[375]

Thus, nobody is unawakened and nobody is awakened or well awakened, rather, it is the Supreme Lord, Who is free, Who appears (lit. 'shines') in this way and that. That freedom is destroyed by conceiving (distinctions between being) unawakened, awakened and fully awakened. By being devoid of such notions (of oneself and others) as 'awakened' and the like, one becomes tranquil.

'By just praising (the Lord) in this way as the imperishable Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu, Viśvambhara and Hari, the liberation (attained) in the Age of Darkness (*kali*) abides forever.'

By looking graciously on (this) teaching of the (Vaiṣṇava) Pāñcarātra and taking it to be authoritative, he (now) teaches the plane of Śakti.

108) The constant meditation of the Lord's Divine Attributes

नित्यो विभुर्निराधारो व्यापकश्चाखिलाधिपः ।
शब्दान् प्रतिक्षणं ध्यायन् कृतार्थोऽर्थानुरूपतः ॥ १३२ ॥

nityo vibhur nirādhāro vyāpakaś cākhilādhipaḥ |
śabdān pratikṣaṇaṃ dhyāyan kṛtārtho'rthānurūpataḥ[376] || 132 ||

'Eternal one', 'omnipresent one', (self-sufficient) 'without support',[377] 'all-pervading one', and 'Lord of all'—meditating every moment on (these) words, one achieves the goal in accord with (their) meaning. (132) (130)

Word-for-word meaning: *nityo* Eternal, *vibhur* omnipresent, *nirādhāro* without support, *vyāpakaś* all-pervading, *cākhilādhipaḥ* and the Lord of all, *dhyāyan* meditating *pratikṣaṇaṃ* every moment *śabdān* on (these) words, *kṛtārtho'rthānurūpataḥ* one achieves the goal in accord with (their) meaning.

'"May I (never) not exist, rather may I always exist." Such is seen to be everybody's hope due to which the love for the Self is directly apparent.'

375 ŚSt 1/7

376 Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *prakṛtārthānurūpataḥ* for *kṛtārtho'rthānurūpataḥ*

377 Śiva is free and independent to be and act in every way. He has no need of any support.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

"The omnipresent one is omniscient, and is everywhere Śiva Himself" by meditating in this way every moment in accord with the sense (of this teaching) and the meaning of the words (*padārtha*), one achieves the goal. This is the meaning. (Thus, every time I reflect that) "I know and I act" (by Śiva's grace), one is liberated by nature (spontaneously) here itself. This is the overall sense. And the same is taught in the Spanda (teachings, where we read):

'The streams of the pulsation (*spanda*) of the qualities, along with the other (principles), are grounded in the universal vibration (of consciousness) and so attain their being; therefore, they can never obstruct the enlightened. Yet for those whose intuition slumbers, (these vibrations of consciousness) are intent on disrupting their own abiding state of being (*svasthiti*), casting them down onto the terrible path of transmigration, so hard to cross. Therefore, he who strives constantly to discern the Spanda principle rapidly attains his own true state of being even while in the waking state itself.'[378]

Śivopādhyāya

"The omnipresent one is the Supreme Lord whose nature is eternal existence and the like." Pondering on those words repeatedly in accord with their meaning, one achieves the goal. This is the meaning. Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa has also declared the greatness of praising (the Lord's) names in every word of (his) *Stavacintāmaṇi*, for example, (where he writes):

'Meditate on (just His) name also with (many kinds of) meditations. What fruit can (meditation) bear that is centred on other supports?'[379]

109) The universe is an illusory magic show (133–135 (131–133))

अतत्त्वमिन्द्रजालाभमिदं सर्वमवस्थितम् ।
किं तत्त्वमिन्द्रजालस्य इति दार्ढ्याच्छमं व्रजेत् ॥ १३३ ॥

atattvam indrajālābham idaṃ sarvam avasthitam |
kiṃ tattvam indrajālasya iti dārḍhyāc chamaṃ vrajet || 133 ||

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[378] SpKā 19–21.
[379] StCi 19cd

"All this (universe) is without reality, like a magic show (*indrajāla*), for what reality is there of a magic show?" By the firmness (of this conviction), one attains peace. (133) (131)

Word-for-word meaning: *sarvam* All *idaṃ* this (universe) *avasthitam* is *atattvam* without reality, *indrajālābham* like a magic show, *kiṃ* what *tattvam* reality (is there) *indrajālasya* of a magic show?" *dārḍhyāc* By the firmness (of this conviction), *vrajec* one attains *chamaṃ* peace.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'All this (universe) is without reality.' Without essence, it is like a magic show (*indrajāla*). Based on this realization (*pratīti*), it should be taught that all this (that we perceive in daily life) is like a magic show; the true reality, which is the perceiver, is beyond that. The sense (of this teaching) is that by the firm stability of this meditation (*bhāvanā*), one who knows reality attains the plane of Nirvāṇa (where all bondage ceases).

Śivopādhyāya

'(The universe is) without reality' means it is unreal by nature and so is like a magic show. The meaning is that (if we ask) "what is reality?" (the answer is) nothing at all (in this illusory world)! Thus, all this is realized to be like a magic show. The meaning is that it is not what truly exists (*vastusat*).

110) The Self is unchanging and the universe is Void of existence

आत्मनो निर्विकारस्य क्व ज्ञानं क्व च वा क्रिया ।
ज्ञानायत्ता बहिर्भावा अतः शून्यमिदं जगत् ॥ १३४ ॥

ātmano nirvikārasya kva jñānaṃ kva ca vā kriyā |
jñānāyattā bahirbhāvā ataḥ śūnyam idaṃ jagat || 134 ||

How can the unchanging Self possess knowledge or action? (And yet all) external entities depend on perception (*jñāna*) (in order to be known). (Clearly), therefore, this universe is Void (of any existence of its own). (134) (132)

Word-for-word meaning: *kva* How can *nirvikārasya* the unchanging *ātmano* Self possess *jñānaṃ* knowledge *kva ca vā* or *kriyā* action? *bahirbhāvā* (And yet

all) external entities *jñānāyattā* depend on perception (in order to be known). *ataḥ* (Clearly), therefore, *idaṃ* this *jagat* universe *śūnyam* is Void (of any existence of its own).

Swamijī: But, in fact, the soul, the nature of your Self, is *nirvikāra*; it is without changes, it has no changes, it has no *vikṛti*. So, actually, there is neither knowledge nor lack of it. Here you find lack of it; here you find knowledge. But it is all a joke. It is a kind of change in you that you can't understand. There is some change in him–he can understand. So, this is change. Wherever there is change, there is ignorance; as long as there is change, say change of perception. Where there is one-pointed perception, that is reality. There is neither knowledge nor ignorance that is what he says here.... For instance, you can't understand anything; just try to see that non-understanding state—you will get entry in God consciousness. When you understand and just find out "how I have understood", you will get entry into God consciousness.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The sense (of this verse is as follows). Unassociated with the powers of knowledge and action, from whence can a conception of objectivity and the like (arise)? (Indeed) from nowhere! Thus, the sense is that this inconceivable (*nirvikalpa*) universe manifests as that of one who is devoid of thought. And the same (is said in chapter three of) the *Mālinīvijaya*:

'The power of the Sustainer of the Universe is said to be one with Him, O Goddess. It is She Who assumes the form of His will when He wishes to emit (the universe). Hear now how She, though one, becomes many.

(When that power) instils here in this world, the certainty that: 'this is such and should not be known to be otherwise', then (She) is called the power of knowledge. When assuming a state of intent towards Her task of the form—'may all this be such' and that very instant makes it so, She is considered to be active here (in this world).

Although She, the Mistress (of the universe), has only two forms in this way, She becomes many (*anekadhā*), like a Wishfulfilling Gem, because of the divisions brought about by the limiting adjuncts (*upādhi*) imposed upon Her by (Her) objects.

She has arisen there such that She is differentiated into the state of the energies of the phonemes (*mātṛbhāva*) and because of (Her) divisions is of two, nine and fifty kinds and (also manifests as) Mālinī.[380]

Śivopādhyāya

The Self is consciousness and nature (awakened) consciousness. It is without division and is immutable. So **'how can it possess knowledge or action?'** Knowledge and action are just changes (whereas the Self is unchanging). External things depend on that (i.e. perception in order to be known). Thus, one should meditate that all this is nothing but the Void (of illusion). As is said in the *Candrajñāna*:

'All the lower and the upper directions, Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space, mind, intellect, ego and these qualities (of Nature)—everything is Void. Without support, everything is established there (in Emptiness). Whatever differentiated (*sakala*), existing thing (*bhāvarūpa*) is described in the Tantras is completely without essence, O Candra, it is like the dream of illusion (*māyā*). O son, renounce error, everything is established in the Void. Power (*śakti*) comes forth from the Void, from power the letters were born and, in the same way, Mantras from letters and from Mantras the imperishable creation. Thus, you should meditate on the universe as the Void that is never destroyed.'

Thus, the universe also, which is an object of knowledge and action etc, is nothing at all. (By reflecting) in this way, one attains the state of Anuttara (or 'the unexcelled state of being'—*anuttarabhāva*) of firmly rooted pure consciousness. This (practice is) in Śakti's state.

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[380] MV 3/5–10ab. MV 3/5ab and 3/9cd are quoted in TĀv ad 11/72–73ab. MV 3/5ab and 3/5cd are quoted in TĀv ad 1/2. MV 3/5ab-6ab, 8cd-9ab are quoted in TĀv ad 1/67cd (68cd). MV 3/5–10ab is quoted by Rājānaka Rāma in SpKāvi. p. 148 and Bhagavadutpala in SpPra ad 1/1. At the end of the latter citation, we find this extra line not found in the edition of the MV: *tatra mātṛtvam āpannā pañcāśadvarṇamālinī* | 'There, She, who is the fifty-lettered Mālinī, becomes the universal Mother (mātṛ).' MV 3/5–10ab is also quoted in ŚSūvi ad 3/19 along with MV 3/10cd-11ab, 3/12ab, 13ab (with variants), 11cd, 15cd. See notes to my translation of the *Mālinīvijayottara loc. cit.* for the variants.

Discussion

This and the previous verse encapsulate, as it were, the meditations on the teaching that the world is illusory, that is, only provisionally, not ultimate. The point is that 'all this (universe) is without reality, like a magic show (*indrajāla*)' (133ab (131ab)). There are two basic meditations concerning the nature of reality. One concerns one's own identity as Śiva and all that that implies, including Śiva's glory as the radiance that generates all forms. The other is that the universe is illusory and deluding Māyā. It has no more reality than a conjuring trick. In this perspective, the second verse serves to explain why this is so.

Śivopadhyāya accordingly classifies this meditation as belonging to the empowered means as it involves reflection on the part of the yogi that the universe is illusory. Ānandabhaṭṭa, however, sees this practice as belonging to the Śāmbhava means because there is no thought. As he says: 'this inconceivable (*nirvikalpa*) universe manifests as that of one who is devoid of thought.'

111) The world is just a reflection in the intellect. Bondage and liberation are just frightening thoughts.

न मे बन्धो न मोक्षो मे भीतस्यैता विभीषिकाः ।
प्रतिबिम्बमिदं बुद्धेर्जलेष्विव विवस्वतः ॥ १३४ ॥

na me bandho na mokṣo me bhītasyaitā vibhīṣikāḥ |[381]
pratibimbam idaṃ buddher jaleṣv iva vivasvataḥ || 135 ||

"There is neither bondage nor liberation for me." These are the frightening (thoughts) of one who is fearful. (But in actual fact), this (world) is (just) a reflection of the intellect, like (the reflection of) the sun in the waters. (135) (133)

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[381] The printed edition of the Śivopādhyāya's version of the *Vijñānabhairava* reads: *bhītasyaitā vibhīṣikāḥ*—'These frighten one who is fearful'. MSs K, Ch and Ānandabhaṭṭa's version of the *Vijñānabhairava* reads: *bālasyaitā vibhīṣikā*—'These frighten a child'. Cited in TĀv ad 3/21–22 the reading is *jīvasyaitā vibhīṣikāḥ*—'these frighten the individual (fettered) soul'. This variant echoes the following verse, which is part of the introduction to the meditations (*dhāraṇa*) taught at the beginning of the *Vijñānabhairava*, which says:

> 'These (notions of His nature) are for those whose intellect has not awakened, (like reprimands) that frighten children, like a sweet that a mother (gives a child), all (this is said) to impel (them) to act (for their own advancement).' (13)

Word-for-word meaning: *na* (There is) neither *bandho* bondage *na* nor *mokṣo* liberation *me* for me. *etāḥ* These are *vibhīṣikāḥ* the frightening (thoughts) *bhītasyaitā* of one who is fearful. *idaṃ* This (world is just) *pratibimbam* a reflection *buddher* of the intellect, *iva* like *vivasvataḥ* the sun *jaleṣv* in the waters.

According to Swamijī, this meditation is in *Śāktopāya* no doubt because it involves the manipulation of thought constructs in order to align them with reality.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'The consciousness of one sullied (by Impurity) is the individual fettered soul because of the (encompassing) grip of Māyā.'[382]

This matter is examined in the *Paramārthasara* with (statements) such as (this, which are) very clear. Now (it is also said) there itself:

'Just as the image of the moon moves (when reflected) in moving water and stands still when (the water) is still, so too this Self, the Great Lord (who is reflected) in the body, senses and the worlds.'[383]

According to such (teachings), everything is a reflection of the intellect, like the reflection of the sun and moon in water. The sense is that one should connect in this way, the example to what it exemplifies.

Śivopādhyāya

My (true) pure consciousness nature is neither bound nor liberated because it is not conditioned by space, time or the like. Bondage and liberation refer only to that which is limited (and conditioned). These thoughts of bondage and liberation are those of a frightened person who has not reflected on his own (true) nature because (he is under the) influence of the power of Māyā. (It is said in the Upaniṣads) that 'fear exists because there is (the notion that there is) a second (person apart from me)'.[384] (Thus), one who reflects on the

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[382] *PS* 16ab.

[383] *PS* 7.

[384] *BṛUp* 1/4/2.

non-duality of consciousness (is not affected by) frightening things. (For him, they are not real, they are) like scarecrows that protect (the crops in) paddy fields by frightening away the sparrows (that eat the rice). What will thoughts such as—'one is bound by this', 'this should be done', 'liberation (is attained) only by (doing) this'—do to those who know reality? For Śuka teaches: 'travel playfully along the path free of the three qualities–what is prescribed and what is prohibited? (Nothing at all!)'[385] And it is also said by the poet Kalhaṇa:

'The scarecrow in the rice field whose face is thin and burnt protects by instilling fear in the multitude of sparrows. (But) used to save (someone) in a forest, what could it do there (to protect him from) wild, ferocious elephants?'

Just as (the apparent movement of) the solar orb (reflected) within water is reversed, so too (the objects of the senses in) the intellect. (Its) limited objects in the form of, for example, 'I am bound' (or) 'I am liberated', Desire and the like are similarly reversed. Thus, one should abandon the (confused) intellect (*buddhi*) (that questions) 'what has happened to me?' This is because it is the intellect (*buddhi*) and the rest (of the psychophysical organism) and the like that make it manifest, (it has no other reality), and so too because (ultimate reality) is beyond it.

112) Abandoning the senses and abiding in the Self

इन्द्रियद्वारकं सर्वं सुखदुःखादिसंगगम् ।
इतीन्द्रियाणि संत्यज्य स्वस्थः स्वात्मनि वर्तते ॥ १३६ ॥

indriyadvārakaṃ sarvaṃ sukhaduḥkhādisaṃgamam |@lblītīndriyāṇi
saṃtyajya svasthaḥ svātmani vartate || 136 ||

(All) association with pleasure, pain and the like occurs through the senses. Therefore, (knowing this), one who, having abandoned the senses, is established within himself (undistracted by their activity), abides within his own (true) nature. (136) (134)

Word-for-word meaning: *sarvaṃ* All *sukhaduḥkhādisaṃgamam* association with pleasure, pain, and the like *indriyadvārakaṃ* occurs through the senses.

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[385] Śuka teaches in some places in the Yogavāsiṣṭha but I could not trace this reference there.

iti Therefore, (knowing this), *saṃtyajya* (one who), having abandoned *indriyāṇi* the senses, *svasthaḥ* established within himself (undistracted by their activity), *vartate* abides *svātmani* within his own (true) nature.

Swamijī: (This meditation is in) *Śāktopāya* ending in the Śāmbhava state. 'This is a *sādhanā* in wisdom, in understanding, a practice in wisdom.'[386]

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By abandoning the notion of difference (between) the perceiver, (its) object and perception, (the yogi) is established within himself. The meaning is that he is his (own true) Self.

Śivopādhyāya

Everything that reaches (the perceiver) by means of the senses consists of pleasure, pain and the like, set in relation (to one another). (One should reflect that) "in actual fact (none of this) pertains to me, whose nature is consciousness." Thus, for this reason, one should abandon the senses. The senses are rightly abandoned by being established within oneself (undistracted by their activity), that is, by abiding within one's own true nature. According to the stated teaching, namely these, 'the mind, intellect and senses (abide) within the outpouring of consciousness,' the knowledge that the senses are the outpouring of the pure consciousness of one's own (essential) nature is the state of being established within one's own (true) nature. (The verb) 'abides' is in the present tense in the sense of the potential (precative) mood. And so (the practice taught here is that) one should abide established within the Self (*ātmasaṃstha*).

113) The object of knowledge is just knowledge alone

ज्ञानप्रकाशकं सर्वं सर्वेणात्मा प्रकाशकः ।
एकमेकस्वभावत्वात् ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं विभाव्यते ॥ १३७ ॥

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[386] The practice begins within the domain of the activity of the senses, that is, perception. The means here is that of knowledge (*jñānopāya*) which the empowered (*śākta*) one. Properly applied, it culminates in the experience of pure consciousness that transcends the activity of the senses, which is the Śāmbhava state.

jñānaprakāśakaṃ sarvaṃ sarveṇātmā prakāśakaḥ |
ekam ekasvabhāvatvāt jñānaṃ jñeyaṃ vibhāvyate || 137 ||

Everything (in this world) is illumined by knowledge and the Self is the illuminator because it is all (things). Knowledge is one, because its nature is one, (it is knowledge that) is perceived to be the object of knowledge.[387] (137) (135)

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[387] This verse is as it is read by Śivopādhyāya. Ānandabhaṭṭa reads:

jñānaprakāśakaṃ sarvam ātmā caiva prakāśakaḥ |
evam ekasvabhāvatvāj jñānaṃ jñeye vibhāvyate || 135 ||

Everything (in this world) is illumined by knowledge and the Self is (also) the illuminator. As it possesses one and the same nature, knowledge is perceived to be within the object of knowledge.

Kṣemarāja quotes another, earlier version of this verse in his commentary on ŚSu 3/2—'knowledge is binding'. It reads:

jñānaṃ prakāśakaṃ loke ātmā caiva prakāśakaḥ |
anayor apṛthagbhāvāj jñāne jñānī prakāśate ||

Knowledge is the illuminating light in the world (of objectivity) and the Self is the (universal) illumining light (of all perceptions). As they do not exist separately from one another, the knower shines (manifest) within knowledge.

Bhāskara comments on this *sutra* saying: '(Empirical) knowledge relates to the objects of the senses and so is (a form of) cognitive awareness (*jñāpti*) sullied by attachment, etc. This is bondage, the veil that obscures the mind's essential nature. Practicing detachment from internal and external objects, the perceiving subject is liberated from (his) thoughts (*mantavyatā*) whenever (they arise).'

Again, Jayadev Singh translates this verse as follows: 'In the world, knowledge is light that reveals, and *Ātmā* is the universal light that reveals. As both *jñāna* (knowledge) and *Ātmā* are light and there is no difference between them, the knower himself is revealed in knowledge.'

Swamijī has taken this version of this verse to be the correct one and so translates it as follows:

'Knowledge is the illuminator in the world and so too the Self. As the two are not separate, the knower is experienced within knowledge.'

After quoting this verse, Kṣemarāja explains it as follows.

'According to the stated view of the *Vijñānabhairava*, ignorance is also essentially the light (of consciousness) itself. How can it be binding? That is true if one were to recognize that in this way (to be so) by the Supreme Lord's grace, if (however), due to His power of Māyā, there is no such reflective awareness, then (as

Word-for-word meaning: *sarvaṃ* Everything (in this world) *jñāna-prakāśakaṃ* is illumined by knowledge, *ātmā* the Self is *prakāśakaḥ* the illuminator *sarveṇa* because it is all (things). *jñānaṃ* Knowledge *ekam* is one, *ekasvabhāvatvāt* because its nature is one, *vibhāvyate* (it is knowledge that) is perceived to be *jñeyaṃ* the object of knowledge.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'The appearing ((*prakāśamāna*) literally 'shining' of things) is not separate from the light (of consciousness)[388] and that Light is not separate from the reflective awareness (it has of itself). The reflective awareness that "I am' (*ahaṃ*) is not other than one's own (essential) nature. "I am the reflective awareness that I am" is consciousness alone.'[389]

According to this teaching, nothing manifests or exists apart from the Light (of consciousness).

Śivasūtra 3/3 says) 'the absence of discernment of (the principles) beginning with the Force (of limited agency) (*kalā*) is Māyā.' This lack of discernment is that of the principles that range from that of Force, which is limited agency, up to Earth, arranged as the Obscuring Coverings (of the individual soul), (the subtle body called) the City of Eight and the gross body.

[388] This line is quoted above by Śivopādhyāya ad v 63 (62).

[389] The first line is quoted above by Śivopādhyāya ad v 63 (62). The whole verse is quoted in his commentary here. Both verses are found in the anonymous commentary on Kṣemarāja's *Śivasūtravimarśinī* 3/2. These two follow there:

prakāśamāne paramārthabhānau
naśyaty avidyātimire samaste |
tadā budhā nirmaladṛṣṭayo'pi
kiṃcin na paśyanti bhavaprapañcam || iti ||
jñānaṃ na bhavato bhinnaṃ jñeyaṃ jñānāt pṭhaṅ nahi |
ato na tv itarat kiṃcit tasmād bhedo na vāstavaḥ || iti ca ||

When the Sun of ultimate reality is shining and all the darkness of ignorance is destroyed, then the awakened, although their vision is without stain, do not see any of the ongoing development of fettered existence at all.

Knowledge is not separate from fettered existence and the object is not separate from knowledge, thus, there is nothing other than that, and so, duality (which is the difference between them) (*bheda*) is not real.

'In actual fact, the triad of knowledge, (its) object and the knower does not (ultimately) exist.'

Having experienced, in accord with this characterization, that everything is made of consciousness, he who is well established in the knowledge of reality understands that 'knowledge is the object of knowledge and the rest (of the factors of perception)'. This is the sense (of this verse).

Śivopādhyāya

'Everything (in this world)', that is, all existing things, are the objects of the illumination (of the Light of consciousness), that is, objects of perception that are 'illumined by knowledge'. The affixes called *'kṛtya'* and *'lyuṭ'* have many applications.[390] By using the word 'knowledge' as an agent (noun), (it comes to mean) 'illuminator', which is the perceiving subject whose object of knowledge is such, that is, the object of illumination of the perceiver. This is the meaning. Having referred to objectivity, the existence of which is established (*sādhya*) by the perceiver, he refers to the subjectivity, the existence of which is established (*sādhya*) by the object, by saying that **'by virtue (that it is) all (things), the Self is the illuminator'**. The Self is the perceiver, that is, the illuminator (along) with everything, that is, (of all) that is an object of knowledge. What could subjectivity be dependent upon (to be such) apart from objectivity? (To say that the Self is) a perceiver, (the question arises which demands a response) "of what is it a perceiver?" This is the meaning.

Thus, the object gives life to the perceiver. The nature of subjectivity is objectivity and subjectivity is objectivity because (they both share) the same nature (*prakṛti*) (i.e. they are both essentially cognitive consciousness) equally. Thus, knowledge, which is the perceiver, and the object of knowledge, which is the object of perception, should be considered to be one single reality (variously) qualified (as subject or object). As is said:

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[390] *Pāvyā* 3/3/113. Kṛtya suffixes such as–*tavya* and–*anīya* form imperative nouns such as *kartavyam* 'should be done', *gantavyam* 'one should go', *lekhanīyam* 'should be drawn or written' or *mānanīya* 'should be respected'. *'lyuṭ'* is the suffix *ana* which denotes verbal activity, and also the sense of 'abode' or 'instrument'. For example, adding the suffix—*ana* to *prakāśa*—'light', we get *prakāśana*, which means 'illumination'. Similarly, *manas*–'mind' > *manana*–thinking.

'O beloved if perceivers were not to exist how could these objects of perception exist? The one reality is subject and object. Thus, impurity does not exist.'[391]

Moreover:

'The appearing ((*prakāśamāna*) literally 'shining' of things) is not separate from the light (of consciousness) and that Light is not separate from the reflective awareness (it has of itself). The reflective awareness that "I am' (*ahaṃ*) is not other than one's own (essential) nature. "I am the reflective awareness that I am" is consciousness alone.'[392]

Now, the perceivers who, in order to attain the plane free of thought, rest in just one out of the hundred and twelve planes of emptiness taught previously (as the fruit of each one of the hundred and twelve meditations taught here), are in the liberated state whilst alive for as long as they live. Then, when the body falls away, their liberation is disembodied which, because there is no difference in the Supreme Lord's essential nature (in both kinds of liberation), is (essentially) the same (as the embodied state of liberation).

'His vital breaths do not exit (the body), (rather) they dissolve away completely here (within consciousness).'

According to this secret teaching (*upaniṣad*), those who attend to the formless (*niṣkala*) Brahman are nowhere (subject to) the coming and going (of the cycles of rebirth), like the going to heaven and hell (that prevails) amongst fettered perceivers. (Similarly,) also those who contemplate the Brahman (as the deity) possessing a form do not quit (the body in such a way) that it travels along the Path of the Sun (to join the gods or by the Path of the Moon to the abode of the ancestors).[393] However, (there is a difference between them

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[391] This verse is also quoted by Kṣemarāja in the ŚSūvi ad 1/1. He says it is from the *Ucchuṣmabhairavatantra*. This kind of idealist non-dualism is common to various schools in Kashmir. Compare for example the 10th century (?) *Saṃvitprakāśa* (2/126 cd): *vedyavedakarūpeṇa jñānam eva dvayātmakam* || 'Knowledge itself has two natures in the form of the object of perception and the perceiver.'

[392] This verse is also quoted above by Ānandabhaṭṭa in his commentary here.

[393] According to the Vedāntas, the Brahman has two aspects. One is the formless (*niṣkala*) absolute. The other is a deity that has a form (*sakala*). Those who attend to the first aspect do so conscious that they are bound by Karma. As such,

because), the vital breaths of those who attend to the formless Brahman dissolve away there itself, like a drop of water cast onto a heated pan. That place is the supreme plane, devoid of the desire to know (anything finite), pure, and free of thought constructs. As the *Kaṭhavalli Upaniṣad* states:

'If the five (forms of sensory) perceptions persist along with the mind, (whereas) the intellect remains inactive, (the wise) say that that is the supreme state.'[394]

That which is denoted by the words 'supreme state' is Bhairava's body, that possesses the characteristics stated previously, accomplished (spontaneously) by itself (and is self-evident) (*svataḥsiddha*). (These liberated souls), once dead, do not depend on acquiring the outer food offered to the ancestors (*piṇḍa*), namely sesamum seed, cooked rice, honey and the like as (do) the assemblies of souls enveloped in the impurity of Karma. With the intention (of referring to) all this, he says (the following).

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they are condemned to work it out by being repeatedly reborn, suffering and dying until they develop the discernment that frees them from the attachment that generates Karma. They seek the transcendence of Karma in order to attain immortality. Those who fail to attain it are subject to the continuity round of birth and death. Those who attend on the Brahman 'with form' as deity are not concerned with freedom from Karma. They wish for a good life and that when they die, they will go to heaven (*svarga*) and avoid committing the sins that condemn them to hell (*naraka*). When they leave the body, they continue to live either as gods or simply as ancestors. The former reach the land of the gods by travelling along the Path of the Sun, the latter go to the land of the ancestors by following the Path of the Moon.

Neither are reborn in the sense that the followers of the formless Brahman are. In fact, these are two different visions of life after death that are in many ways contradictory, even though they have coincided for centuries. What happens to the dead who become gods is of relatively little concern. The focus is on those who become ancestors. They are venerated and sustained by their descendants for three generations by the regular offering of food. This is primarily in the form of balls of rice with black sesame seeds (*piṇḍa*). The ritual offering of these balls of rice (*piṇḍadāna*) by the son to his deceased father and ancestors is a very important family event.

394 *Kaṭhopaniṣad* 2/310.

114) The cessation of the mind, intellect, breath and the Self

मानसं चेतना शक्तिरात्मा चेति चतुष्टयम् ।
यदा प्रिये परिक्षीणं तदा तद्भैरवं वपुः ॥ १३८ ॥

mānasaṃ cetanā śaktir ātmā ceti catuṣṭayam |
yadā priye parikṣīṇaṃ tadā tad bhairavaṃ vapuḥ || 138 ||

O Dear One, if the group of four, namely, (all that is) mental (*mānasa*), (intellectual) awareness (*cetanā*), the energy (of the vital breath) (*śakti*) and the (individual) self (*ātman*), wanes away completely, then that (which remains) is Bhairava's body (*vapus*). (138) (136)

Word-for-word meaning: *priye* O Dear One, *yadā* if *catuṣṭayam* the group of four (namely, all that is) *mānasaṃ* mental, *cetanā* (intellectual) awareness, *śaktir* the energy (of the vital breath), *ātmā* (the individual) self, *parikṣīṇaṃ* wanes completely *tadā* then *tad* that (which remains is) *bhairavaṃ vapuḥ* Bhairava's body.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'**(All that is) mental**' is the mind (*manas*), '**(intellectual) awareness**' is the intellect, '**energy**' is the power of the vital breath and '**the (individual) self**', made of these limiting adjuncts, is said to be the individual soul (*jīva*). This '**group of four**', consisting of limiting adjuncts, if it has waned away, that is, if the limiting adjunct of Māyā has fallen away, then what remains as the remnant consciousness is the shining light (of consciousness) like the sun (that shines on a place) free of snow. The sense is that by realizing that firm (unwavering) experience, he becomes Bhairava Himself directly apparent.

Śivopādhyāya

'**(All that is) mental**' is intention (*saṃkalpa*). '**(Intellectual) awareness**' is the intellect. '**Energy**' is called the vital breath. '**The (individual) self**' is the limited perceiver associated with that (triad). If this '**group of four**' '**wanes away**' and is endowed with the wonder of consciousness then '**that (which remains) is Bhairava's body (*vapus*)**', taught previously (in verse 15 where we read): 'the bliss of one's own inner (*antar*) experience of oneself ...'[395] etc.

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[395] The rest of the verse reads: '(its) realm completely free of (all) conceptions, (is

(Someone may ask) if this is so, then how is it that agency and cognitive subjectivity are not perceived to be possessed by a corpse too, just as they are in the state of liberation while alive? (In response to this question, we say), the Supreme Lord is free and eternal. This is His freedom, namely, that when he assents (to the assumption of) the state of an individual soul, He plays with the body and senses etc. as (His) toys and sometimes, having abandoned (His) outer activity by resting in His own essential nature, (He) assents (to the assumption) of the activity which is (inwardly) established (*pratiṣṭhaspanda*) as (happens), for example, in deep sleep. (Similarly), after the falling away of the body (at death), the Supreme Soul, who is free, assents to (assume) the undisturbed, inactive state. Thus, (His) subjectivity etc. is not perceived. This same state is (extolled) in the venerable *Bhagavadgītā* (where we read):

'Just as the embodied soul (experiences) childhood, youth and old age in the body, so too he attains another body (after death). A wise man is not deluded thereby.'[396]

Dvaipāyana has taught in the *Mālāmantrāvasara* that the attainment of another body is Bhairava's body. And it is also said in the *Anuttarabhaṭṭāraka* that belongs to the Bhairava current of scripture that:

'Nothing at all is perceived of the body of one who acts when dead. There is no pleasure and no pain because (he is engaged) in contemplating supreme bliss. (That) place is devoid of the desire to know (anything). (It is) where God is the Stainless One (*nirañjana*) who is devoid of the going and coming (of rebirth) and is the cause that effects timeless (eternity). Devoid of (objective) support and exertion, He is the Void, Śiva Himself. (Along with Him is the Goddess.) By the destruction of (the dead man's individual) consciousness (*saṃjñā*), She is called 'the Lifeless One' and Her form is the Sky (of consciousness).'

A similar thing is said about the Goddess, there itself (in the *Anuttarabhaṭṭāraka*):

'I, whose nature is Voidness, never wander alone. I am made of all things and am everything. I sport with You. Sometimes the universe, which is like this, is said to be this objectivity.'

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that) state of Bhairava's own nature—Bhairavī—(whose) form is (absolutely) full (perfect and complete).' VBh 15

[396] BhGī 2/13.

It is with this same intention that Jaimanīya (Brahmins), in the course of a funerary rite, offer the body, even though it is lifeless, the twenty-one ablutions associated with Viṣṇu. Otherwise, (if they were not to do so), the following (scriptural) statements would lack authority. (They are:) 'Sir, this Self is not destroyed.' 'It is the eternal of eternal (things).' '(The vital breath called) Dhanañjaya, which pervades all (the body) does not leave it even when it is dead.'[397]

Thus, there is no defect at all (in the view that) in death (*pañcatva*) also, Bhairava's body is devoid of thought constructs (and so is as free as in the liberated state whilst alive). Jayaratha has also said that (bathing or performing funerary rites) for those who are devoted to the secret teachings is useless. As (he has) said in (his) hymn:

'Those who, ignorant of reality, having imagined that within the one great and abundant consciousness that pours forth (as all things) there is talk of birth and death, teach attendance to bathing sites, temples and the like (as a remedy for that)—indeed (*hanta*) have no shame!'

Thus, for those discerning ones who have faith in that path, even liberation in this life appears to be (as valueless) as grass, what to say of funerary rites that draw their life from the vision fettered souls (have of reality). As (is said) in (that same) hymn also:

'One for whom the supreme nectar of discernment has arisen by contact with (the true) teaching (*naya*) considers liberation in life to be (as worthless) as grass.[398] When the time to die has drawn close, pulsing radiantly within his own consciousness, he has no desire indeed for the rites like funerals and the like conceived by fettered souls.'

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[397] Cf. SvT 7/314ab: *na caiva yāti cotkrāntau tanuṁ tyaktvā dhanañjayaḥ* |

'Dhanañjaya does not move (away) having abandoned the body in the course of death.'

Concerning the various forms of the vital breath in the body, based on the account in the *Svacchandatantra* and elsewhere, see Dyckowski 2009, vol. 11 pp. 195–202 note 230.

[398] *tṛṇam iva na sā jīvanmuktir gatā gaṇanīyatām* more literally means '(consider) that liberation in life is, like grass, not taken into consideration (as being of any value).'

Offering food to one who is deceased is also just a joke! As is said:

'The body (*piṇḍa*) of a person brings on the distress of the flood of sins accumulated from preceding tens of millions of births. A teacher who, even though he is devoted to ever higher teachings, offers food (*piṇḍa*) to one deceased is (indeed) madness!'[399]

He says (in this way) that for one who takes the support of that (higher) teaching (*naya*), life and death are the same. Life and death only pertain to the body, certainly not to the Self. For the Veda (declares):

'Indeed, (the body) has been abandoned by the soul, it is this that dies. The soul (*jīva*) does not die.'

Two are the states the yogi (attains) who does not waver by virtue of (the practice of) just one of the meditations (taught here) amongst the teachings concerning (the attainment of the liberated state) free of the waves (of the fluctuations of thought). (One is) liberation in life as long as the body continues to exist and (the other is) disembodied liberation after the body has fallen away. There (with regards to that), when the group of four, namely, mind and the rest,[400] has waned away whilst (the yogi) is alive because he is everywhere and always attentive to pure consciousness and possesses its (experience of) the wonder of creation (*sarga*). (Then,) when the body falls away (and he dies), the other body (he acquires) is called 'tranquil awakened consciousness' because his nature is that of the Supreme Lord. He does not exit (from that state as one does a body) (*utkramate*) in order to attain another body.[401] It is not possible for the omnipresent Self to exit (*utkrānti*) (from its location, as when the individual soul exits from the body).

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[399] I translate the word *pramādaḥ* here as 'madness' but it also means 'carelessness' or 'negligence'. The common *smarta* ritual (*śrāddha*) is essentially the offering balls of cooked rice with sesame seeds (*piṇḍa*) to the deceased, who is understood to be in the world of the ancestors (*pitṛ*). The Śaivāgamas teach funeral rites for their initiates, which are meant to liberate them. As liberated souls, they would be ancestors who need offerings.

[400] The verse we are examining teaches that 'the group of four is (all that is) mental (*mānasa*), (intellectual) awareness (*cetanā*), the energy (of the vital breath) (*śakti*) and the (individual) self (*ātman*).'

[401] Read *anyadehāntaraprāpter* for *anyadehāntaraprāptir*.

As is said in the *Vīrayāmala*:

'He who attains liberation by quitting the body (voluntarily) (*utkrānti*) has a notion of measure (*mānakalpanā*).'

'Measure' means limitation (*pariccheda*). Who is it that quits the body (*utkrānti*)[402] within the unmanifest Void without measure? (Nobody, anyway) where would he go?' (It is said):

'If God is present everywhere, pray tell, having exited (from the body), where will he go? Now if God is not present everywhere, He would be (inert) like a jar.'

Thus, set forth (from the body), only one who is liberated in life (attains) liberation, not one who identifies with the body and is foolish (*jaḍa*) due to (his past) actions (*karman*). He only goes to another world in accord with (his) sullied latent traces (of past Karma). It is only for such a one that ancestral rites (*śrāddha*), the offering of food (*piṇḍadāna*) and the like are of use. The venerable Abhinavagupta has explained (the nature) of the latent tendency to identify with the body in the *Mālinīvijayavārtika* (where he writes):

(I may think that) "Today there is (someone) who is giving me the food offered to ancestors and in this way, by the rite of offering food to the ancestors (*piṇḍadāna*), I am acquiring joy for the limbs (of my body). I am well established; my body is full (and complete). I am in heaven by virtue of the unseen (meritorious) action performed by my son, disciple, myself and others. I am very well established in the good (and true) enjoyment (of its fruits)." (Or else, on the contrary, I may think that) ṅobody is giving me the food offered to ancestors, I myself am a sinner. I have no saviour anywhere. I am falling into the ocean of hell."[403]

The unfolding of (the perceptions of) one's own consciousness in this way and that has as its consequence heaven and hell due (to one's own) erroneous

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[402] The word '*utkrānti*' literally means to 'traverse upwards'. It is a term used to denote the voluntary rising of the soul out of the body upwards to traverse into the higher realms in which it is liberated. When it is induced, one could call it 'spiritual, yogic or ritual suicide'. Fasting to death to attain liberation from Karma is considered by Jainas to be a very saintly way to die. There are various prescriptions and interdictions in this regard in the Bhairava Tantras of various schools.

[403] MVV 1/1084–1087.

thinking (*bhrānti*); it is not (because this is) so in reality. Now, enough of (this) irrelevant (talk).[404]

He concludes this (Tantra) (with what follows).

Discussion

Kṣemarāja quotes this meditation in his commentary on ŚSū 3/21—'Merged (into his own nature, the yogi) must penetrate (the phonemes) with his mind.' (*magnaḥ svacittena praviśet*) Bhāskara comments: 'The all-pervasive Lord assumes the form of outer reality (*bāhyākāratā*) in the act of moving (out of Himself). He withdraws (His outer form) into Himself when (this outgoing movement gives way to) the emergence of the (opposite) movement which preceded it and so Śiva merges into His own nature when the outward movement ceases. When (the yogi) becomes Śiva in this way by withdrawing (*nimeśa*, his energies from the outer world), he should use his mind (*cetas*) to enter the phonemes (of his Mantra) as fire does burning coals. Then, by applying *Bhairavamudrā* (*bhairavavṛtti*, through which the power of consciousness expands), (the yogi's) Mantra becomes supremely vitalized and (he acquires many powers including that of) transferring his consciousness into another's body. When this takes place, the Śiva and Bhairava nature of Mantras is clearly made manifest (to him) for otherwise why should Mantra, that consists (merely of) phonemic sounds, be the Lord Himself?

Concluding Verses

The closing declarations: the one hundred and twelve teachings

निस्तरङ्गोपदेशानां शतमुक्तं समासतः ।
द्वादशाभ्यधिकं देवि यज्ज्ञात्वा ज्ञानविज्जनः ॥ १३९ ॥

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[404] Śivopādhyāya is echoing the concluding lines to the passage he has just quoted from the *Mālinīvijayottara* which read:

bhaviṣyati mama trātā kvāpi kāle kathaṃcana |
ityādiḥ saṃvidāṃ sphāras tathaiva phalati svayam ||

'"There will be (someone) to save me somewhere at (some) time in some way." The unfolding of such perceptions (*saṃvid*) bears fruit accordingly (spontaneously) by itself.' MVV 1/1088

nistaraṅgopadeśānāṃ śatam uktaṃ samāsataḥ |
dvādaśābhyadhikaṃ devi yaj jñātvā jñānavij janaḥ || 139 ||

O Goddess! I have revealed (these) one hundred and twelve teachings concerning (the state) free of the waves (of the fluctuations of thought) in brief, knowing which a person possesses the knowledge (that frees from bondage). (139) (137)

Word-for-word meaning: *devi* O Goddess *uktaṃ* (I have) revealed *śatam* one hundred *dvādaśābhyadhikaṃ* and twelve *nistaraṅgopadeśānāṃ* teachings concerning (the state) free of the waves (of the fluctuations of thought) *samāsataḥ* in brief, *yaj jñātvā* knowing which *jñānavij janaḥ* a person possesses the knowledge (that frees from bondage).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

I have taught the teachings in this way concerning the one hundred and twelve meditations. Once known just this, one becomes visibly (*sākṣāt*) the same in nature as Bhairava. This is the overall sense.

The successful Yogi's powers, accomplishments and liberation

अत्र चैकतमे युक्तो जायते भैरवः स्वयम् ।
वाचा करोति कर्माणि शापानुग्रहकारकः ॥ १४० ॥

atra caikatame yukto jāyate bhairavaḥ svayam |
vācā karoti karmāṇi śāpānugrahakārakaḥ || 140 ||

He who applies (himself) here to any one of (these meditations) becomes Bhairava Himself. He curses and graces (others at will) and performs (all his) actions by (his) speech (alone). (140) (139) (138)

Word-for-word meaning: *yukto* He who applies (himself) *atra* here *caikatame* to any one (of these meditations) *jāyate* becomes *bhairavaḥ* Bhairava *svayam* Himself. *śāpānugrahakārakaḥ* He curses and graces (others at will) *karoti* performs *karmāṇi* (all his) actions *vācā* by (his) speech (alone).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

He who is fully established in any one of these meditations graces and curses (others), 'by (his) speech (alone)', that is, just by talking, even if the assembly

(of his) senses has fallen into the heaps of objectivity mixed with the limiting adjuncts (produced by) Māyā. There, (in that case) also, in this same way, abandoning (and renouncing) every single thing, by virtue of the meditation on oneness (grounded in) contemplative absorption, he becomes visibly Bhairava, the possessor of the Light (of consciousness), who is free of the waves (of the fluctuations of thought). This is certain.

Śivopādhyāya

'He who applies (himself)' and is attentive **'here to any one'** amongst these teachings (concerning these meditations), **'by (his) speech (alone)'**, not by exerting an effort, (he becomes Bhairava Himself and) curses and graces (others at will) and performs (all His) actions.

अजरामरतामेति सोऽणिमादिगुणान्वितः ।
योगिनीनां प्रियो देवि सर्वमेलापकाधिपः ॥ १४१ ॥
जीवन्नपि विमुक्तोऽसौ कुर्वन्नपि च चेष्टितम् ।

ajarāmaratām eti so'ṇimādiguṇānvitaḥ |
yoginīnāṃ priyo devi sarvamelāpakādhipaḥ[405] || 141 ||
jīvan api vimukto'sau kurvan api ca ceṣṭitam[406] |

O Goddess! (such a yogi) attains freedom from old age and death and is endowed with (all the yogi's) abilities (*guṇa*) beginning with the power to make himself small at will (*aṇimā*). He is the beloved of the Yoginīs and presides over all the gatherings (of Siddhas and Yoginīs). Although he lives, he is liberated, and even though he (continues) to act (in his daily life, he is untainted).[407] (141–142ab) (139–140ab)

Word-for-word meaning: *devi* O Goddess! (such a yogi) *eti* attains *ajarāmaratām* (freedom) from old age and death *so'ṇimādiguṇānvitaḥ* endowed

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[405] Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *sarvamelāpakārakaḥ*—'(who) brings about all the gatherings (of Siddhas and Yoginīs)' for *sarvamelāpakādhipaḥ*—'presides over all the gatherings (of Siddhas and Yoginīs).'

[406] Ānandabhaṭṭa reads *na lipyate* 'is not tainted' for *ca ceṣṭitam* 'and he (continues) to act'.

[407] Judging by the context, it is quite probable that at some earlier stage of redaction, the *Vijñānabhairava* ended here, followed by the concluding verses that are now 157–159ab (155cd-157). See discussion in the introduction

with (all the yogi's) abilities beginning with the power to make himself small at will. *priyo* (He is) beloved *yoginīnāṃ* of the Yoginīs *sarvamelāpakādhipaḥ* presides over all the gatherings (of Siddhas and Yoginīs). *jīvan api* Although he lives, *vimukto'sau* he is liberated, *ca* and *kurvan api* even though he (continues) to act, *ceṣṭitam* (he is) untainted.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'We have drunk the Soma and become immortal.' Having attained, as is declared in such (passages of the Veda), the state devoid of old age and death by drinking the Soma which is knowledge (*vijñāna*) by virtue of the firmness of the practice of the meditations, he attains (the status of) the Lord of the Yoginīs, that is, of the powers of knowledge, action, bliss and the rest. He is the master (*svāmin*) who everywhere brings about the gathering of all this aggregate of objects and perceivers etc, (although in the state of the fettered soul, his) nature is rendered powerless. He is the non-dual Light (of consciousness) whose body is extremely pure consciousness, the Supreme Soul and Bhairava. This is the general sense (of this verse).

A person who is liberated whilst alive is not tainted by such actions as seeing, hearing and smelling. The Lord also teaches the like (in the *Bhagavadgīta*):

'(One who knows reality and is harnessed (to the Self) (*yukta*), should consider that "I do nothing at all",) although seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, eating, going, sleeping, breathing, speaking, ejecting, holding, opening and closing the eyes (firm in the thought that (it is just) the senses that move among the objects of sense).[408]

He who acts, abandoning attachment, dedicating (his) deeds to the Brahman, is untainted by sin like a lotus leaf is (unaffected) by water.'[409]

And the same is also taught in the Spanda (teachings):

'The streams of the pulsation (*spanda*) of the qualities (*guṇa*), along with the other (principles), are grounded in the universal vibration (of consciousness) and so attain being, therefore, they can never obstruct the enlightened.'[410]

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[408] *BhGī* 5/8–9. Ānandabhaṭṭa quotes only 5/8cd-9ab.

[409] *BhGī* 5/10.

[410] *SpKā* 19.

Thus, it is established that even if (one who is liberated in life is engaged in various) activities, he is not stained (thereby). Doubting that difference (and duality) is of that nature, (the goddess) asks again:

The Inner Equivalents of Ritual

श्रीदेवी उवाच

इदं यदि वपुर्देव परायाश्च महेश्वर ॥ १४२ ॥
एवमुक्तव्यवस्थायां जप्यते को जपश्च कः ।
ध्यायते को महानाथ पूज्यते कश्च तृप्यति ॥ १४३ ॥
हूयते कस्य वा होमो यागः कस्य च किं कथम् ।

śrīdevī uvāca

idaṃ yadi vapur deva parāyāś ca maheśvara || 142 ||
evamuktavyavasthāyāṃ japyate ko japaś ca kaḥ |
dhyāyate ko mahānātha pūjyate kaś ca tṛpyati || 143 ||
hūyate kasya vā homo yāgaḥ kasya ca kiṃ katham |

The venerable Goddess said:

O God! O Great Lord! If this is the nature (and body) (*vapus*) of (the Goddess) Parā, then in the state thus described, what (Mantra) is repeated, what is (that) repetition? Who meditates? O Great Lord, who is worshipped and gratified (by it)? (Who) offers oblation and whose is the offering? Whose is the sacrifice? What is it and how (is it offered)? (142cd-144ab) (140cd-142ab)

Word-for-word meaning: *deva* O God! *maheśvara* O Great Lord! *yadi* If *idaṃ* this (is) *vapor* the nature (and body) *parāyāś* of the Goddess Parā *ca* and *evam uktavyavasthāyāṃ* (then) in the state thus described, *ko* what *japyate* (Mantra) is repeated, *japaś* (what is (that)) repetition (of Mantra) *ca* and *kaḥ* who *dhyāyate* meditates? *mahānātha* O Great Lord, *ko* who *pūjyate* is worshipped *ca* and *kaś* who *tṛpyati* is gratified, *hūyate* (who) offers oblation *kasya* whose *vā* or *homo* the oblation, *kasya* whose *yāgaḥ* the sacrifice *kiṃ* what (is it) *ca* and *katham* how (is it offered)?

Ānandabhaṭṭa

This is (all) clear. Indicating the answer to the previously stated question, (he goes on to say).

Śivopādhyāya

'**This**,' according to the stated method, (is such) when the immanent condition obtains '**What (Mantra) is repeated? What is (that) repetition?**' (This is hard to understand) because there is no duality. '**O Great Lord!**' '**whose is**' (the sacrifice) or (one could ask) what is its purpose?

Discussion

TĀ 4/180cd-181ab, Note 714: Cf. above, 4/121cd-122ab and commentary, with reference to **VBh 147**.

Abhinavagupta is also moved to present inner equivalents to outer ritual. He does this in the wake of his presentation of the Twelve Kālīs as twelve phases in the cycle of perception. This takes place in the domain of the object, cognition and the perceiver. In each of these domains the phases mark the emergence, persistence and withdrawal of that domain comprised in the state of consciousness that dominates in that domain as its condition, that is, 'inexplicable' in the sense that it is not any of the other three. The practice of outer ritual, which involves the application of the power to act (*kriyāśakti*) that operates in the sphere of the Individual Means, has no place in the sphere of the Empowered Means, which is that of the power of knowledge (*jñānaśakti*), in this case, operating as this cycle of perception. The question arises, how the worship of the Twelve Kālīs to be performed here? How is their Mantra to be recited in this internal worship? How should they be visualized (*dhyāna*)? How are the offerings made to the sacrificial fire and the rest of the rites to be performed? As an answer to these implicit questions, Abhinava provides their 'internal' equivalents, practiced mentally and in the sphere of perception proper to the Empowered Means, through which thought is purified and prepared for the realisation of higher non-conceptual (*nirvikalpa*) consciousness. The reader is referred to my translation of TĀ 4/180cd-181ab and notes there where these are presented and compared with the internalizations given here in the *Vijñānabhairava* and by Somānanda in his *Śivadṛṣṭi*.

The Inner Repetition of Mantra (*japa*)

श्रीभैरव उवाच

एषात्र प्रक्रिया बाह्या स्थूलेष्वेवमृगेक्षणे ॥ १४४ ॥
भूयो भूयः परे भावे भावना भाव्यते हि या ।
जपः सोऽत्र स्वयं नादो मन्त्रात्मा जप्य ईदृशः ॥ १४५ ॥

śrībhairava uvāca

eṣātra prakriyā bāhyā sthūlety eva[411] *mṛgekṣaṇe* || 144 ||
bhūyo bhūyaḥ pare bhāve bhāvanā bhāvyate hi yā |
japaḥ so'tra svayaṃ nādo mantrātmā japya īdṛśaḥ || 145 ||

The venerable Bhairava said:

O gazelle-eyed Goddess! The (common) manner (*prakriyā*) (of reciting Mantras)[412] is here, (in this scripture, considered to be) just external and gross. That contemplation (*bhāvanā*) which is experienced (*bhāvyate*) (and takes place) repeatedly again and again in the supreme state is here (according to this scripture) the repeated recitation of Mantra (*japa*). It is the spontaneous Sound (of consciousness). Such is the nature of Mantra that should be recited repeatedly.[413] (144cd-145) (142cd-143)

Word-for-word meaning: *mṛgekṣaṇe* O gazelle-eyed Goddess! *eṣa* The *prakriyā* (common) manner (of reciting Mantras) *atra* is here, *bāhyā* (in this scripture, considered to be) *eva* just external *sthūlety* (and) gross. *hi yā* That, *bhāvanā* the contemplation, *bhāvyate* which is experienced (and takes place) *bhūyo bhūyaḥ* repeatedly again and again *pare* in the supreme *bhāve* state *atra* is here (according to this scripture) *japaḥ* the repeated recitation of Mantra. *so'tra* It is here *svayaṃ nādo* the spontaneous Sound (of consciousness). *īdṛśaḥ* Such is *mantrātmā* the nature of Mantra *japya* that should be recited repeatedly.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(This) procedure (is considered to be) external. Such activities as the repetition of mantra, the recitation (of sacred texts), pilgrimage to sacred bathing sites, are said to be external (for one who is) within the supreme reality.

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[411] Read with Ānandabhaṭṭa *sthūlety eva* for *sthūleṣv eva*.

[412] The term *'prakriyā'* in this case means 'procedure' especially, but not always, ritual procedure. There are a number of *prakriyās*, and not all or everything they include need be ritual; and so, I translate the term as 'modality (of practice)'. There can be no doubt that this is the meaning in the following reference: (Abhinavagupta expounds) 'the modality (of practice) (*prakriyā*) of the teaching (*artha*) of Anuttara Trika, that (he has) understood from (his) teacher's instruction because it is free of doubt, error and the like.' (TĀv 1/16, see also introductory statement to 1/17 and 1/15).

[413] VBh 145 (143) is quoted in SvTu ad 2/137cd-139ab.

Śivopādhyāya

'Contemplation' is the reflecting awareness **'within the supreme state'**, that is, within one's own essential nature that fills everything. It is **'experienced'**, that is, comes about in the form of 'I myself am the supreme Haṃsa, Śiva, the supreme cause.'[414] That is '(unstruck) Sound', the deity who should be repeatedly recited, the nature of which is the reflective awareness of the uncreated ego. The connected sense is that the contemplation, that is generated (thereby), is the repeated recitation of Mantra. The 'Mantra that should be recited' is said to be the spontaneous Sound (of consciousness), the nature of which is Mantra. This is because the teaching is that 'separate from the Mantra (he recites), one who recites Mantra is never successful'[415] **'here'**, according to the scripture that consists of the teachings concerning the subtle reality.

Discussion

The repetition of Mantra (*japa*) is a fundamental practice in all schools of Hinduism. At its most basic common level, which is that of Corporeal Speech (*vaikharī*), the Mantra is recited aloud. It is repeated mentally at the Middle Level of Speech (*madhyamā*). In the meditation taught here, Mantra is repeated in the innermost seat of consciousness as its spontaneous Unstruck Sound. In the following passage, Abhinavagupta quotes this verse in ĪPVv 2, p. 262 and expounds, in these terms, the practice it teaches as follows.

'Surely, if the repetition of Mantra is a continuous round of words, how can the activity, which is the repetition of Mantra, take place within the essential nature of Supreme Speech, which, being undivided, is unaffected by time? The utterance of a round (of sounds) takes place by separating (one sound from another) repeatedly (which is thus set in time) and that itself is its nature (*rūpa*) (it is not secondarily associated with it). (The response to this objection is that) in the supreme state, the repetition takes place (in a state unaffected by time, it occurs, as it were) just once in a single flash (*sakṛdvibhātatva*)

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[414] SvT 4/399cd.

[415] This line is drawn from the lost *Śrīkaṇṭhīyasaṃhitā*. The full verse is quoted in the ŚSūvi ad 2/1. The second line reads: *jñānamūlam idaṃ sarvam anyathā naiva siddhyati*. 'The root of all this is cognitive consciousness (*jñāna*) otherwise, it would not be successfully (established).'

and the repetition of Mantra is like a continuously repeated action there, when it has just arisen. The word 'once' that denotes (something that takes) place a single time or one that is synonymous with 'always' removes the doubt that there is a break. As was said before, '(Speech) arises spontaneously'. (Abhinava then quotes VBh 145 (143)) Thus (according to this teaching), continuously repeated action takes place on the supreme plane also as (it takes place) on this plane that has fallen to the level of the mirror of the Speech of Vision (which is the domain of archetypal ideas) and the Middle One (which is thought).'

In terms of the elevated symbolism of Abhinava's Trika exegesis, this repetition of Mantra pervades all the yogi does, says and his every breath if he is established in a firm and unwavering attention to the Heart of consciousness. Thus, he writes:

'Whatever one who is established in this uncreated Heart does, or (however) he breathes or reflects, is all considered to be his repetition of Mantra (*japa*).'[416]

This exegesis has its roots in the *Śivasūtra* that teaches 'common talk is (his) recitation of Mantra' (*kathā japaḥ*).[417] This *sūtra* draws its inspiration from the Krama teachings concerning *kathā*. In the context of the Krama teachings, the word does not simply mean 'talk' or 'the telling of a story', which are its common meanings. It has a deeper sense. A true Krama master can transmit the ultimate state attained by initiation by direct transmission (*saṃkramaṇa*) of his own elevated state just by gazing (*dṛṣti*) at his disciple, or just by a word (*kathā*). This *kathā* comes in the form of pithy aphorisms concerning the ultimate nature of reality from various perspectives. Simply by hearing them, a worthy disciple is liberated.

Bhāskara comments on this *Śivasūtra* as follows:

'Once the awakened (*prabuddha*) yogi's level of consciousness has risen to that of (the universal) agent, all that he says is (his) recitation of Mantra. Observing his vow and reciting Mantra (in this way), he is the best of men

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[416] TĀ 4/194. Jayaratha explains: 'The 'Heart' is the (very) Self (*ātman*) of scripture and the reality (it teaches).' TĀv ad 1/21

[417] ŚSū 3/27. In Bhāskara's version it is 3/28.

(*puruṣottama*). His common talk is the flow (*sañcāra*) of his utterances (each) supported by the vitality (of consciousness) and is the recitation of Mantra which should thus be known to be of four kinds; namely, the empowered (*śākta*) recitation, the recitation of the Gander (*haṃsa*), the recitation of the individual soul (*paudgala*) and the recitation without parts (*niṣkala*). The recitation without parts is the (reflective awareness of) the components of OṀ (*praṇava*) while the recitation of the Gander (*haṃsa*) is (the awareness) of the energy of the divine resonance of consciousness (*nāda*). The recitation of the individual soul is (the abiding awareness) of the movement of the breath as it flows (ebbing and flowing) constantly 21,600 times (a day).'

Commenting on this same *sūtra*, Kṣemarāja draws from the *Svacchandatantra*, where it says:

"I myself am the supreme Haṃsa, that is Śiva, the (ultimate and) supreme cause (of all things)."[418]

Kṣemarāja comments: According to this teaching imparted in the venerable *Svacchandatantra* (Śiva's unconditioned) Ego (*aham*) is eternal because it is the contemplation of supreme subjectivity (*parāhaṃbhāvanā*).

'The reflective awareness (*vimarśa*) of that God beyond the gods who is supreme awakened consciousness is (His) supreme power that is omniscient and is endowed with (universal) perception (*jñāna*).'

According to this teaching imparted in the venerable *Kālikākrama*,[419] 'whatever one who is mounted on the reflective awareness of the uncreated Ego, which is the Great Mantra, says, becomes the repetition of the Mantra. It is the reflective awareness of the Deity who is one's own Self (*svātmadevatā*) that is (constantly) repeated (in an unbroken round) (*anavaratāvartana*).'

Kṣemarāja then goes on to quote this verse from the *Vijñānabhairava*, followed by verse 156 (154–155ab) concerning the spontaneous repetition of the

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[418] SvT 4/399cd.

[419] Kṣemarāja quotes the *Kālikākrama* several times throughout his works. It is unknown to his teacher Abhinavagupta and so may well have been redacted sometime in Kṣemarāja's life time. The appearance of the term '*vimarśa*', although common in the philosophy of the Pratyabhijñā, is rare in primary sources. Thus, this too is evidence that this is a late Krama text.

Mantra HAṂSA formed by the resonance of the flow of the breath. The reader is referred below for an exposition of that verse.

Inner Visualization and Meditation (*dhyāna*)

ध्यानं हि निश्चला बुद्धिर्निराकारा निराश्रया ।
न तु ध्यानं शरीराक्षिमुखहस्तादिकल्पना ॥ १४६ ॥

dhyānaṃ hi niścalā buddhir nirākārā nirāśrayā |
na tu dhyānaṃ śarīrākṣimukhahastādikalpanā || 146 ||

Meditation (*dhyāna*)[420] is indeed the immobile, formless and unsustained intellect. Meditation is certainly not imagining the face and hands etc. of the body (of a deity). (146) (144)

Word-for-word meaning: *dhyānaṃ* Visualization *hi* is indeed *niścalā* the immobile *nirākārā* formless *nirāśrayā* unsustained *buddhir* intellect. *dhyānaṃ* Visualization *na tu* is certainly not *śarīrākṣimukhahastādikalpanā* imagining the face and hands etc. of the body (of a deity).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The repetition of Mantra takes place by listening to the Word called Unstruck Sound, namely 'I am the Brahman" (*so'haṃ brahmā*). As its nature is this kind

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[420] A common, well-known meaning of the word '*dhyāna*' is meditation, in the sense of 'close attention'. This is what it means in the *Yogasūtras*. In the Tantras and elsewhere, it often also denotes the visualized form of the deity. In that context, which is clearly the one in which it is being used here, the word is better translated as 'visualization'. The '*dhyāna*' of a deity is normally understood to be the visualization of its anthropomorphic form with hands and faces etc. It is common practice that amongst the preliminaries of the ritual worship of a deity, a verse or two is dedicated to its *dhyāna*. There are yogas, commonly Buddhist ones, that centre on the visualization of a deity imagined to be radiating from its Mantra that serves as the focus of practice inwardly and externally. The painter is taught to visualize the deity in order to paint it better. Here, the *Vijñānabhairava* points out that the recollection of Śiva's form, described in this way in the scriptures, is a thought construct. Moreover, to visualize Him in this way implies that the mind is engrossed in duality, whereas true meditation on Śiva is a state of awareness in which He is experienced as one with one's own essential nature. True meditation is the reflective awareness of the object of meditation as one's own Self.

of Mantra, the Mantra, which is the body of its repetition, is the intellect which, by the power of profound contemplation (*samādhāna*), is immobile like (the flame of a) lamp in a windless (place), although, it has fallen into the domain of the object of knowledge (*vedya*) and (that of the perceiver) that is not. That is said to be meditation (*dhyāna*). Thus, (it is the intellect that is) **'formless and unsustained'.**

Śivopādhyāya

'Immobile' means fully developed. **'Formless'** means devoid of the many (varied) manifestations (of phenomena). **'Unsustained'** means devoid of supports (in the subtle body) such as the Root, the Heart, and the End of the Twelve.

Discussion

Jayaratha effectively comments on this verse as part of his commentary on TĀ 1/88–89ab (89–90ab). There, Abhinava writes:

'He who, with a mind free of impurity, meditates on (this), the supreme object of meditation, located on the plane of 'the going and coming' (*gamāgamapada*) (of the breath), by suppressing just (his) memory alone (which is the source of thought), attains Supreme Śiva, Who is called Bhairava, by the repeated recitation of Mantra (*japa*) also.'

Jayaratha writes: 'He whose mind is like that, namely, 'free of impurity'—that is, free of the impurity which is each and every manifestation of duality (*bheda*). The mind (*manas*) thinks (*manute*) and so is consciousness, which is essentially reflective awareness. According to the dictum 'all thought is recollection',[421] the 'memory alone', that is, just memory (in itself, not a particular memory), is the act of imagining (*vikalpana*) a body, face, hands etc. 'Suppressing' that is destroying it by emptying it out of the manifestations of form etc. and taking the support of that (mind free of duality and the recollection of bodily form). He 'meditates on the supreme object of meditation', because it is not contracted by any fixed form and is Śiva, the supreme cause (of all things), contemplating (Him) as one with his own Self.' Jayaratha goes on to quote this verse.

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[421] This saying is also quoted in TĀv ad 1/182cd-183ab.

The interiorized versions of practice are often not the same in differing sources. Abhinava defines inner visualization as follows in the *Tantrāloka*:

'Visualization (*dhyāna*) in the highest sense (*pāramārthika*) is whatever (the yogi) fashions externally and internally by his own (free) will out of his own (true conscious) nature (which is endowed with the power) of emanation (*sṛṣṭi*).'[422]

Somānanda understands it as follows in his *Śivadṛṣṭi*:

'(What is meant) here by *dhyāna* is that everything is viewed with the eye of contemplation (*bhāvanā*) as being omniform; wise (indeed) is that contemplation (*cintā*) that sees all things. By whatever organ of sense an entity is perceived, there, in each place, Śiva's state is perceived as (truly) existing. That too is said to be *dhyāna*. In whatever perception (the notion) comes to mind that 'I am Śiva', that too is said to be visualization, that (occurs) in that very way within that thought (*cintā*).'[423]

'Uninterrupted repetition of Mantra (*japa*) is the repetition that (persists) in all states, doing it constantly in many forms and arising present in all things. 'The supreme (form of) the repetition of Mantra (is attained) by the practice that 'I am here and so is He'. 'I abide (here) generating intentions and thus (also) words in (my) mouth.' That should be known to be the repetition of (Śiva's) name and as truth (*satya*) etc. It is of three kinds, namely (the notion that) 'I am not bound', 'I am not liberated' and 'those two (bondage and liberation) are the Impurities (of ignorance that sullies the soul)'.[424]

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[422] TĀ 4/195.

[423] *dhyānaṃ nāmātra yat sarvaṃ sarvākāreṇa lakṣyate |*
bhāvanācakṣuṣā sādhvī sā cintā sarvadarśinī ||
yena yenendriyeṇārtho gṛhyate tatra tatra sā |
śivatā lakṣitā satyā tad dhyānam api varṇyate ||
yasyāṃ yasyāṃ pratītau tu śivo 'smīti manogamaḥ |
tasyāṃ tathaiva cintāyāṃ tad dhyānam api jalpitam || ŚDṛ 7/78–80

[424] *aniruddho japo 'sty eva sarvāvasthāsv asau japaḥ |*
nānākāraiḥ sadā kurvann udayan sarvavastugaḥ ||
abhyāsenāsmi so 'py atra japaḥ parama ucyate |
saṃkalpāñ janayann asmi sthitaḥ śabdān ato mukhe ||
so hi nāmajapo jñeyaḥ satyādis trividho hi saḥ |na me bandho na me mokṣo
malatvena saṃsthitau || ŚDṛ 7/85–87

Inner Worship

पूजा नाम न पुष्पाद्यैर्या मतिः क्रियते दृढा ।
निर्विकल्पे परे व्योम्नि सा पूजा ह्यादराल्लयः ॥ १४७ ॥

pūjā nāma na puṣpādyair yā matiḥ kriyate dṛḍhā |
nirvikalpe pare vyomni sā pūjā hy ādarāl layaḥ || 147 ||

(Real) worship (*pūjā*) is not (performed by just offering) flowers and the like. It is that which makes the intuitive mind (*mati*) firm (and stable) in the Supreme Sky (of transcendental consciousness), free of thought constructs. By the respectful (and devout performance of) that (kind of) worship (the mind) certainly dissolves away.[425] (147) (145)

Word-for-word meaning: *pūjā nāma* (Real) worship *na* (is) not (performed) *puṣpādyair* by (just offering) flowers and the like. *yā* (It is) that which *kriyate* makes *matiḥ* the intuitive mind *dṛḍhā* firm (and stable) *pare vyomni* in the Supreme Sky (of transcendental consciousness) *nirvikalpe* free of thought constructs. *ādarāl* By the respectful (and devout performance of) *sā* that (kind of) *pūjā* worship (the mind) *hy* certainly *layaḥ* dissolves away.

Swami Lakshmanjoo (Bäumer 2002: 173–174) explains: 'The real worship is where your intellect is firmly established in the supreme void of thoughtlessness ... where one merges with great respect, with great honour. You dissolve. You lose everything. Not with dishonour, not with hatred, but with honour you merge in that supreme thought-free state of *cidākāśa*.'

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The sense is that true worship is to dissolve and rest within the Supreme Sky, that is, the Supreme Sky of Consciousness.

Śivopādhyāya

(True) worship is to dissolve away and rest in the Great Sky, which is the Light of Supreme Consciousness by (virtue of one's own) devout, most excellent faith. Thus, (Real) worship (*pūjā*) is not (performed by just offering) flowers and the like.

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[425] VBh 147 (145), is quoted in TĀv ad 4/121cd-122ab and ad 28/190.

Discussion

In his commentary on the *Tantrāloka*, Jayaratha writes:

'(the most elevated and authentic) worship of Maheśvara (Śiva, the Great Lord) is the recognition (of all things and Deity) as being one's own nature by the progressive process (*karma*) (of exercising) each of the forms of insight (*jñapti*) that will be explained (here in the *Tantrāloka*).'[426]

The forms of liberating insight (*jñapti*) are No Means and the three categories of means to realization (*upāya*), which Abhinava expounds, one at a time, in chapters two to five of his *Tantrāloka*. These are then taught through, and as, the many practices and ritual procedures of the remaining part of the *Tantrāloka*.[427] As Jayaratha explains: 'This is the state (of something, by virtue of which it is) a means, namely, the capacity of (that) means, which does not depend on (anything) else, to reveal (*āviṣkaraṇa*) its goal. By worshipping that means to the goal, it dissolves away just there, and a state of oneness prevails in the means, as it does in that which is its goal.' He[428] goes on to quote this verse of the *Vijñānabhairava* as his authority for this view.

What this means is that, essentially, all the practices taught in the *Tantrāloka* and, by extension, in all the treatises of Kashmir Śaivism and its schools, are ways of worshipping the deity. They are all grounded in devotion. So, despite the insistence on the primacy of insight for the attainment of liberation, practice is largely understood to be action. All means to realization are forms and aspects of the power that consciousness possesses to act with intention (*icchā*), focused by the knowledge (*jñāna*) of its purpose and manner of execution (*kriyā*).

Moreover, worship (*pūjā*) is said here to be a way of quelling the activity of the mind. Thus, it is essentially understood to be a form of Yoga which, according to the well-known definition of the *Yogasūtra* (1/1), is the 'stilling of the activity of the mind' (*cittavṛttinirodha*). Although the result is the same, the Yoga taught here differs from that of the *Yogasūtra*. According to the latter, the mind is constantly distracted, shifting from one object to another. This condition, which is painful and binding, is remedied by concentration. As the mind

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[426] TĀv ad 1/21

[427] See TĀ 1/247ab-247cd (246cd-247ab).

[428] TĀv ad 28/190.

is nothing apart from its activity, when it is stilled, it ceases to exist. The *Vijñānabhairava* teaches that it is stilled by worship, which induces it to dissolve away into the Void of pure consciousness.

The sense of this dissolving away into consciousness is not that phenomena simply disappear. Rather, they are recognized to be integrated into the essential wholeness (*pūrṇatā*) of all-embracing consciousness. This recognition of the intimate relationship with every single thing and consciousness and hence with everything else, is experienced as an expansion of individual consciousness into the boundless universal consciousness of deity. This activity in which the individual merges into the universal, is worship. As Jayaratha puts it:

'The flux of phenomena consists of the diverse (types of sensations), namely, (the sight) of form, taste and the rest. (The process of) uniting (it consists of) making (it) one with the supreme conscious nature which, free of limiting adjuncts and undivided by time and space etc., is full (and all-embracing). That is experienced as (the supreme form of) worship.'[429]

Perfect fulfilment attained by practicing each meditation

अत्रैकतमयुक्तिस्थे योत्पद्येत दिनाद्दिनम् ।
भरिताकारता सात्र तृप्तिरत्यन्तपूर्णता ॥ १४८ ॥

atraikatamayuktisthe yotpadyeta dinād dinam |
bharitākāratā sātra tṛptir atyantapūrṇatā || 148 ||

The state which is (Bhairava's) form filled (with all things) that arises day after day when one abides here in any one of (these) practices (*yukti*), is that (spiritual) satisfaction (experienced) here which is perfect fulfilment (*pūrṇatā*). (148) (146)

Word-for-word meaning: *bharitākāratā* The state which is (Bhairava's) form filled (with all things) *yotpadyeta* that arises *dinād dinam* day after day *atraikatamayuktisthe* abiding here in any one of (these) practices, *sā tṛptir* that (spiritual) satisfaction (experienced) *atra* here (is) *atyantapūrṇatā* perfect fulfilment.

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[429] TĀv ad 4/121cd-122ab. Concluding by saying 'the point is that this (teaching) is not just our own idea.' Jayaratha then goes on to quote this verse from the *Vijñānabhairava*.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'**That satisfaction**' is associated with the firmness of the accomplished contemplation that is established in (any) one of the practices (*yukti*) amongst the aforementioned meditations (*dhāraṇā*). (Developing to) ever higher levels, (it reaches) the first and foremost relish of the juice (of the aesthetic delight of contemplative) absorption devoid of thought constructs (*nirvikalpasamādhi*). This is what is meant (here by 'satisfaction', namely,) the fulfilment (that is, the complete) perception (*upalabdhi*) of the essential nature of one's own full (and perfect) Self.

Discussion

Kṣemarāja quotes this verse when commenting on the *Śivasūtra* that declares that '(The yogi's) food is knowledge.'[430] He explains that one of the ways to understand it is that 'the knowledge which is the reflective awareness of one's own nature is (the yogi's) food which, because it affords full (and perfect) satisfaction, is the means to attain rest within one's own Self.'[431] Commenting on the same aphorism, Bhāskara explains that: 'The knowledge (meant) here is the supreme (knowledge of ultimate reality) correctly explained in these two sections (of the *Śivasūtra*). Know that to be like food which satisfies (the yogi) fully, for by reflecting on it (*nibhālana*) repeatedly, (one achieves) the perfect plenitude (*paripūrṇatā* of consciousness).'

The Inner Oblation

महाशून्यालये वह्नौ भूताक्षविषयादिकम् ।
हूयते मनसा सार्धं स होमश्चेतनास्रुचा ॥ १४९ ॥
यागोऽत्र परमेशानि तुष्टिरानन्दलक्षणा ।

mahāśūnyālaye vahnau bhūtākṣaviṣayādikam |
hūyate manasā sārdhaṃ sa homaś cetanāsrucā || 149 ||
yāgo'tra parameśāni tuṣṭir ānandalakṣaṇā |

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[430] *jñānam annam* ŚSū 2/9.

[431] *atha ca yat svarūpavimarśātmakaṃ jñānaṃ tat asya annaṃ pūrṇaparitṛptikāritayā svātmaviśrāntihetuḥ.*

The offering of (all) the elements, the senses and (their) objects etc, along with the mind into the fire which is the Abode of the Great Void with the sacrificial ladle of awareness—that is (true) oblation (*homa*). O Supreme Goddess, the sacrifice (*yāga*) here is the satisfaction which is bliss.[432] (149–150ab) (147–148ab)

Word-for-word meaning: *hūyate* The offering *bhūtākṣaviṣayādikam* of all the elements, the senses and (their) objects etc., *sārdhaṃ* along with *manasā* the mind *vahnau* into the fire *mahāśūnyālaye* which is the Abode of the Great Void *cetanāsrucā* with the sacrificial ladle of awareness *sa* that *homaś* is (true) oblation (149). *parameśāni* O Supreme Goddess, *yāgo'tra* sacrifice here *tuṣṭir* is the satisfaction *ānandalakṣaṇā* which is bliss.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

mahāśūnyālaye śūnyātiśūnyarūpe parabhairavasvarūpe vahnau bhūtendriyatattvādirūpaṃ sarvaṃ jagat saṃkalpavikalpātmakaṃ vibhāgakalpanāhetunā manasā saha yatra caitenaiva (> *cetanaiva*) *sruktayā hūyate sa homas tattvata iti* || 147 ||

That '**oblation**' (takes place) in reality where '**the offering**' is made with awareness alone as the sacrificial ladle of all the universe in the form of the elements, senses, the metaphysical principles (*tattva*) and the rest that are intentions and thought constructs along with '**the mind**' which is the cause of the conception of division '**into the fire which is the abode of the Great Void**', which is the Void (of consciousness) beyond the Void (of the illusory world) and nature Supreme Bhairava.

Discussion

Somānanda explains the inner oblation as follows:

'"All things are forms of Śiva and they are within Śiva's fire. I am He, Śiva, who is well content!" This is said to be the supreme offering to the fire (*homa*). What is not mine in (this) form here, is mine in (some) other form. Thus, because of the contentment (I feel), I am devoid of craving. Such is the offering to the fire.'[433]

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[432] *VBh* 149–150ab is quoted in TĀv ad 4/121cd-122ab and 201–202, Also in ŚSūvi ad 2/8

[433] *ŚDṛ* 7/90cd-92ab

The *Śivasūtra*, which was revealed to Vasugupta at about the same time as Somānanda wrote the *Śivadṛṣṭi*, presents another perspective on the inner fire sacrifice by declaring that 'the body is the oblation'.[434] Bhāskara comments:

'In the blazing fire of consciousness, at one with Mantra, the body abandons the gross, phenomenal bonds of *Karma* and, as an oblation (in this fire), it assumes the form of a divine body. This is the supreme body of the all-pervasive Lord of Consciousness who is the Sacrificer who constantly offers the body and other phenomena in the great, eternally blazing and unfettered fire of Great Being (*mahāsattva*).'

The sacred field of pilgrimage

क्षपणात्सर्वपापानां त्राणात्सर्वस्य पार्वति ॥ १५० ॥
रुद्रशक्तिसमावेशस्तत्क्षेत्रं भावना परा ।
अन्यथा तस्य तत्त्वस्य कापूजा कश्च तृप्यति ॥ १५१ ॥

kṣapaṇāt sarvapāpānāṃ trāṇāt sarvasya pārvati || 150 ||
rudraśaktisamāveśas tat kṣetraṃ bhāvanā parā |
anyathā tasya tattvasya kā pūjā kaś ca tṛpyati || 151 ||

O Pārvatī! the penetration of Rudra's power is that sacred field of pilgrimage (*kṣetra*)[435] which is supreme contemplation (*parā bhāvanā*) because it removes (*kṣapanāt*) all sins and saves all (living beings) (*trānāt*). Otherwise, what worship (could there be) of that (non-dual) reality and who (could be) satisfied (thereby)? (150cd-151) (148cd-149)

Word-for-word meaning: *pārvati* O Pārvatī! *rudraśaktisamāveśas* the penetration of Rudra's power *tat* is that *kṣetraṃ* sacred place of pilgrimage *bhāvanā parā* which is supreme contemplation *kṣapaṇāt* because it removes *sarvapāpānāṃ* all sins *trāṇāt* saves *sarvasya* all (living beings). *anyathā* Otherwise, *kā* what *pūjā* worship (could there be) *tasya* of that *tattvasya* (non-dual) reality *kaś ca* and who *tṛpyati* could be satisfied (thereby)?

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The satisfaction (attained) by the bliss that arises from the profound contemplation (*samādhāna*) mentioned previously is itself the sacrifice, which is the

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[434] *śarīraṃ haviḥ* ŚSū 2/8

[435] The word '*kṣetra*' is derived here from *kṣapaṇa*—'removal' and *trāṇa*—'saves'.

worship of the deity. **'The sacred place of pilgrimage (*kṣetra*)'** is penetration by the power of transcendental (Śiva) because it removes the fetters and saves from phenomenal (fettered) existence. It is a pilgrimage, for example, to Kurukṣetra, which is the field of Dharma, and other (similar places). **'The penetration of Rudra's power'** and the manifestation of the powers, omniscience and the rest. The point is that it is not possible in (any) other way for there to be a separate act of worship, offering of libation and other ritual action of non-dual reality. (Next), he teaches that bathing is also to be observed as primary amongst the right ways of conduct.

Inner Bathing

स्वतन्त्रानन्दचिन्मात्रसारः स्वात्मा हि सर्वतः ।
आवेशनं तत्स्वरूपे स्वात्मनः स्नानमीरितम् ॥ १५२ ॥

svatantrānandacinmātrasāraḥ svātmā hi sarvataḥ |
āveśanaṃ tatsvarūpe svātmanaḥ snānam īritam || 152 ||

The essence of one's own Self is surely freedom, bliss and pure consciousness. (The purifying) bath is said to be the penetration in all respects of one's own Self into that essential nature. (152) (150)

Word-for-word meaning: *svātmā svatantrānanda-cinmātrasāraḥ* The essence of one's own Self is *hi* surely freedom, bliss and pure consciousness. *snānam* (The purifying) bath *īritam* is said to be *āveśanaṃ* the penetration *sarvataḥ* in all respects *svātmanaḥ* of one's own Self *tatsvarūpe* into that essential nature.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

The main form of ablution is just the contemplation of merger (*layabhāvanā*) **'into that essential nature'** (which comes about) by the experience of the innate nature of one's own non-dual Self by practicing the meditations taught (here), as the essence of the pure consciousness which is the bliss of one who is free. This is the meaning.

Discussion

Abhinava describes the inner ablution (*snāna*) as he does the inner forms of outer practice in chapter four of his *Tantrāloka*, which is dedicated to the

Empowered Means. There, Abhinava declares that the inner contemplation of outer practice purifies it by refining it, as metal is by fire, to the state of pure non-conceptual consciousness. He writes:

'(The true, inner) ablution is said to be the immersion of the body in the white ash (produced) when the fire (that devours the offerings), which is outpouring (*ullāsin*) (of awakened) consciousness, has arisen and the fuel of the universe has been burnt away.'[436]

Although Somānanda did not know about the classification of practice into the basic categories formulated by Abhinavagupta on the basis of the *Mālinīvijaya*, it is clear that he understood inner bathing to be, as Abhinava did, the refinement of thought into the sound notion of one's own Śiva nature, which is a cardinal feature of the Empowered means. Thus, he writes:

'Bathing is considered to be (a process of) purification that takes place by means of this understanding (*pratipatti*), (whether) suffering or happy, (indeed), in every experience (*pratipatti*). The mental delight (of the thought) that "I am Śiva" is considered to be the highest (kind of) bathing with water. "Consciousness is pure. The universe is of that nature (and) I am (also) like that." This is (my firm) conviction (that has come about) by purification with (this) water. Purifying bathing is spoken of in this way.'[437]

The Worshipper, the offering and the Worshipped are one

यैरेव पूज्यते द्रव्यैस्तर्प्यते वा परापरः ।
यश्चैव पूजकः सर्वः स एवैकः क्व पूजनम् ॥ १५३ ॥

yair eva pūjyate dravyais tarpyate vā parāparaḥ |
yaś caiva pūjakaḥ sarvaḥ sa evaikaḥ kva pūjanam || 153 ||

Those sacrificial substances with which Parā and (Bhairava) the Supreme (Lord) (*parāpara*) are worshipped or with which they are offered libation

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[436] TĀ 4/116cd-117ab.

[437] *pratipattyānayā snānaṃ nirmalīkaraṇaṃ matam |*
duḥkhe vāpi sukhe vāpi sarvāsu pratipattiṣu ||
śivo'smīti manohlādo jalasnānaṃ paraṃ matam |
cin nirmalā tanmayaṃ hi jagad asmi tathāvidhaḥ ||
ity āsthā jalaśaucena śuddhisnānaṃ tathoditam | ŚDṛ 7/88–90ab

and he who is the worshipper—all this is one only. What then remains of worship? (153) (151)

Word-for-word meaning: *yair eva dravyais* those sacrificial substances with which *parāparaḥ* Parā and (Bhairava) the Supreme *pūjyate* are worshipped *vā* or *tarpyate* (with which they are) offered libations *yaś caiva* and he who (is) *pūjakaḥ* the worshipper, *sarvaḥ sa* all this *evaikaḥ* is one only *kva pūjanam* what (then remains of) worship?

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'Those sacrificial substances' such as flowers and the like with which one worships or the milk and candid sugar etc, with which one offers libation to **'Parā and (Bhairava) the Supreme (Lord)'** (*parāpara*), that is, Supreme Bhairava along with the Goddess Parā. **'And he who is the worshipper'** is the object of worship. With this knowledge of reality, **'what then remains of worship'** (that is performed) in a gross form (*sthūlamārga*). The sense is that everything, that is, the object of worship and worship etc, has one essential nature and so there is no difference (and duality) anywhere (between them).

The Great Goddess and the Flow of the Breath

व्रजेत्प्राणो विशेज्जीव इच्छया कुटिलाकृतिः ।
दीर्घात्मा सा महादेवी परक्षेत्रं परापरा ॥ १५४ ॥

vrajet prāṇo viśej jīva icchayā kuṭilākṛtiḥ |
dīrghātmā sā mahādevī parakṣetraṃ parāparā || 154 ||

The exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) should exit and the living being (*apāna*—the inhaled breath) should enter. (Impelled) by the will, its form is crooked. That Great Goddess is extensive (*dīrghātmā*), both transcendent and immanent (*parāparā*). She is the most excellent sacred field (*kṣetra*) (that is, penetration of Rudra's power). (154) (152)

Word-for-word meaning: *prāṇo* The exhaled breath *vrajet* should exit *jīva* and living being (*apāna*—the inhaled breath) *viśej* should enter. *icchayā* (Impelled) by the will, *kuṭilākṛtiḥ* (its) form is crooked. *sā* That *mahādevī* Great Goddess *dīrghātmā* is extensive, *parāparā* both transcendent and immanent. *parakṣetraṃ* She is the most excellent sacred field.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

(The breath is crooked) because the exhaled breath clashes together with (the inhaled breath) in the Heart and elsewhere in the course of inhalation.[438] The secret meaning of this verse has been taught extensively in the *Tantrāloka* and other (books). One should understand it from that. There also, it can (only) be learnt correctly from the teacher's mouth and so we have not gone into (this) here extensively. Please forgive (me for that).

अस्यामनुचरन् तिष्ठन् महानन्दमयेऽध्वरे ।
तया देव्या समाविष्टः परं भैरवमाप्नुयात् ॥ १५५ ॥
षट् शतानि दिवारात्रौ सहस्राण्येकविंशतिः ।
जपो देव्याः समुद्दिष्टः प्राणस्यान्ते सुदुर्लभः ॥ १५६ ॥

asyām anucaran tiṣṭhan mahānandamaye 'dhvare |
tayā devyā samāviṣṭaḥ paraṃ bhairavam āpnuyāt || 155 ||
ṣaṭ śatāni divā rātrau sahasrāṇy ekaviṃśatiḥ |
japo devyāḥ samuddiṣṭaḥ prāṇasyānte sudurlabhaḥ || 156 ||

Following along, and abiding within her, in the sacrificial rite made of Great Bliss, may he who is penetrated by that Goddess attain Supreme Bhairava.

It is taught that the repeated recitation (*japa*) of the goddess (who is the Mantra HAṀSAḤ) takes place six hundred and twenty-one thousand times in the course of one day and night. Within the vital breath, it is very difficult to attain.[439] (155–156) (153–155)

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[438] The text here does not make sense. It appears that some part of it is missing. Ānandabhaṭṭa is explaining why the breath is 'crooked'. He explains that this is because exhalation and inhalation 'strike' together in the Heart and then in the End of the Twelve above the head or below the nose. Śivopādhyāya dedicates a long commentary to this verse and the following two, which he reads together as a single passage.

[439] Verse 156 (154cd-155ab) is quoted in ŚSūvi ad 3/27. There, the reading of the last quarter is *sulabho durlabho jaḍaiḥ*—'It is easy to attain (by the wise but) hard to acquire by the foolish (*jaḍa*).' Ānandabhaṭṭa agrees with Śivopādhyāya's reading that I have retained. However, it must be admitted that Kṣemarāja's reading is clearer and more satisfactory. Moreover, as he preceded these commentators by several centuries, he may well have had access to less corrupt manuscripts than they did.

Word-for-word meaning: *anucaran* Following along, *tiṣṭhan* and abiding *asyām* within her, *mahānandamaye'dhvare* in the sacrificial rite made of Great Bliss, *samāviṣṭaḥ* may he who is penetrated *tayā* by that *devyā* Goddess *āpnuyāt* attain *paraṃ* Supreme *bhairavam* Bhairava. *samuddiṣṭaḥ* It is taught that *japo* the repeated recitation *devyāḥ* of the goddess (who is the Mantra HAṂSA) (takes place) *ṣaṭ śatāni* six hundred *ekaviṃśatiḥ* twenty-one *sahasrāṇy* thousand (times) *divā rātrau* in the course of one day and night. *sudurlabhaḥ* It is very difficult to attain *prāṇasyānte* when the vital breath ceases.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

'Within the vital breath' is the state in which (the breath) comes to an end.

Śivopādhyāya

The Goddess Parā, who is the repeated recitation (*japa*) of the letters SA and HA, is mentioned in the beginning (of the *Vijñānabhairava* in verse 24 that starts with) 'exhalation is above ...'. She is mentioned in the middle (in verse 81, where it says) 'uttering the letter H mentally',[440] that is to say, uttering HAṂSA mentally, it 'dissolves into the Tranquil One'. Then (she is mentioned) again in the fourth quarter of all the verses as the fruit (of this recita-

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Kṣemarāja's version of this verse adds the following line: 'Such is the *japa* of the goddess (Gāyatrī) that has been prescribed, which is quite easy for the wise, but difficult for the ignorant.'

Swami Lakshmanjoo explains why this practice is so difficult in TSRP (p. 60). There he writes that the sound of the breath is HAṂSA or SO'HAM and that 'this Mantra is called Ajapamahāgāyatrī. If the attentive yogi who is intent on this meditation (*avadhāna*) repeats this Mantra from morning to evening, that same repetition of Mantra will continue along with the meditation on it (*anusandhāna*) when he is asleep also. Whereas, on the contrary, the yogi who fails to attend to it whilst he is awake will not be able to practice this Mantra when he sleeps and so this *japa* is hard for him to attain. In other words, the yogi must meditate on this *japa* attentively constantly, only then will this Mahāgāyatrī *japa* be fruitful.'

[440] Verse 81 says: 'The tongue (turned up) into the centre (of the nasal cavity), having cast (one's) attention (there) in the middle of the mouth gapping wide open whilst uttering (the letter) H mentally, (the breath) then dissolves away into the Tranquil One.'

tion, namely) the plane (*bhūmi*) of the Void, Prajñāpāramitā (the Perfection of Wisdom) and the state free of thought constructs. (Now, Bhairava) concludes (the *Vijñānabhairava*) with (the three verses) beginning with **'the exhaled breath should exit'**.[441] The exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) is SAḤ. In this form, the Light (of consciousness) **'exits'**, that is, flows out (manifesting outer objectivity). The living being (the inhaled breath) (*jīva*) is 'AHAM' (I) in this modality, it is the night (of the absence of subjectivity). When the exhaled breath flows out and the inhaled breath enters in, there is life (which the Goddess engenders) for the optative (of *'vrajet'* 'should exit' and *'viśet'* 'should enter'), which is used here in the sense of 'that which makes (the movement of the breath) possible'. (Indeed, life consists of the breath.) Now, because the living being (*jīva* i.e. inhalation) is present in the vital breath and because the form of the vital breath is crooked like the letter 'H',[442] the living being (inhalation) is also 'crooked'. This is because if the breath, once returned, were not to enter within, there would be no life. Thus, as the phase of inhalation itself is the emergence of the living being, it is said that **'the living being should enter.'**[443] The use of the optative (*liṅ*) is used here in the sense of an expected occurence (*sambhāvanā*).

(The breath) is crooked due to the Supreme Lord's will, who is (absolutely) free (to make anything be as he chooses). (The form of) Kuṇḍalinī that faces downwards is in form of (a spiral) consisting of three and a half turns. Thus,

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[441] The long commentary that follows covers the three verses 154–156 (152–155ab).

[442] The inhaled breath—*apāna*—is called *jīva*, which means the living being or individual soul. The sound of the inhaled breath is H. In the Kashmiri Śāradā script, the letter H is ह्, which looks 'crooked'.

[443] The word for the inhaled breath—*apāna*—is *'jīva'*, which means 'living being' as well as 'life'. The double meaning is intentional. The exhaled breath is called *prāṇa*. The word also denotes the vital breath in general. The double meaning of this word appears to support the natural view that it is this that gives life to the psychophysical organism. This is a common view but is nonetheless mistaken. Here Śivopādhyāya tells us why. If once the breath has been inhaled but it does not return, the body becomes lifeless. Thus, it is inhalation that is 'the living being' and 'life'. This makes good sense. According to the common, well-known, Indian view, the developing embryo in the mother's womb comes to life by the incoming flow of the vital breath. Conversely, when a person dies, exhalation is the last phase of the breath. In English, we also say that a person who has died has 'expired'.

the energy (*śakti*) of the vital breath (*prāṇa*) present within it is also crooked. The space within the vital breath is supremely subtle, (like) the end of a tip of a hair split into hundreds of parts. (Indeed, it is so subtle that) it is formless. As the sustainer is crooked, so too, by association, is the sustained. But in actual fact, the vital breath itself (has no form). It is not crooked. The (living, vital) state of the living being (i.e. the inhaled breath) arises from the pure consciousness of the space of the heart. Thus, scripture (*śruti*) (declares):

'The first transformation of consciousness is the vital breath.'[444]

The state of a living being (*jīvatva*) is that of one who identifies with a conditioned (*nyūna*) body. (It arises) from the pure consciousness of the reflective awareness of 'I' (*aham*) in its (unconditioned) plenitude. It is like the emergence (and expansion) of the space in a jar (when it is broken) because the great space (outside) exists.

The energy of the breath has the form of a double spiral because it forms one loop within Īḍā, the channel (of the vital breath) on the left and (another) loop within Piṅgalā, the channel on the right. As for the central channel, called Suṣumnā, it consists of one and a half measures and so (the vital breath within it) is one and a half (measures). Emerging from the space of the Heart, the vital breath as the exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) is HAM. (Then,) by descending from the End of the Twelve, as the state of the inhaled breath (*apāna*), it is SA.[445] Such is the origin of the two phonemes (that constitute

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[444] See aphorism is from the *Tattvārthacintāmaṇi* by Kallaṭabhaṭṭa. According to Bhāskara, he wrote the *Spandakārikā*, which was the first three quarters of a commentary on the *Śivasūtra*. The *Tattvārthacintamaṇi*, that has been lost, was the fourth part. See Dyczkowski 1992: 11; see also TĀ 6/12 and TĀv ad 15/297cd-303ab. The inhaled breath transports the individual soul—*jīva* and so is called *jīva* 'the living being'. The soul enters the body this way with every inhalation and gives life to the body. The moment a baby is born, it draws breath for the first time and the life-giving breath enters its body. So while it may appear at first sight that *prāṇa* should be the name of the exhaled breath, it is not so. The living being entering the body, giving it life, exhales, transporting the vital force to all its parts. Thus, the generic name for the vital breath is *prāṇa*.

[445] Note that Śivopādhyāya has just said at the beginning of this commentary that the exhaled breath makes the sound SAḤ and in inhaled HAṀ. Presumably, there the two together make SO'HAṀ. Here, the sound is HAṀ—for exhalation and SAḤ—for inhalation. Śivopādhyāya explains here that the first form is the manner in

HAṂSA). It said concerning the life of the living being that, by the (clearly) manifest utterance of the two phonemes:

'The living being repeats the mantra HAṂSA, HAṂSA incessantly.'[446]

Thus, as is taught (here), it is the living being who recites (this mantra) and certainly not the Supreme Lord because the repetition of the mantra 'HAṂSA' is produced by identification with the limited (conditioned body in the state of alienation). (The experience) on the plane of the Lord (*īśvaradaśā*) as full subjectivity (*pūrṇāhantā*) is "I am He" (*ahaṃ saḥ*), "He is me" (*so'ham*), "I am this" (*aham idam*) and the like because it is clothed with reflective awareness. The (experience in the fettered state is that of) HAṂSA because its nature is to reject (*hāna*) and accept (*samādāna*). (Thus, the individual soul feels that) 'this should be abandoned', 'this should be accepted', 'that is mine' and 'this is not mine'.

The Goddess Parā

In this way, when the rays of the sun of consciousness unfold, there is the Day of the Light (of consciousness) and by their withdrawal, the Night, which is the inhaled breath. In this way, the Goddess Parā is taught in (this) Tantra of Consciousness (*Vijñānatantra*) to be the fruit common to all (the meditations) as the realm of the Void, the consciousness in the space of the Heart and the root of (the opposites represented by) SA and HA, Dharma and Adharma, the long and the short (vowels), day and night, fire and moon. (Bhairava) explains (this), her extensive nature, saying that **'that Great Goddess is extensive, both transcendent and immanent (*parāparā*), She is the most excellent sacred field (*kṣetra*)'.**

That Great Goddess is the one Light of the vast expanse of consciousness (*mahadambara*). She moves through the Sky of Consciousness and is present (*gāminī*) in the subject, object and means of knowledge (moving through

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which the Supreme Lord recites the *ajapa* Mantra and the second is how the individual soul recites it in the body. Note also that the Sound (*nāda*) of the breath is produced by the Goddess Parā, who, we were told before (in verse 24), is the emission (*visarga*) of the two forms of the breath.

[446] *haṃsa—haṃseti mantreṇa jīvo japati sarvadā*. This is the second line of a verse that was possibly a part of the *Vijñānabhairava* inserted here. See discussion.

them and relating them to one another). She bestows existence to the two phonemes SA and HA and is the receptacle of their repose. As she resides in the space at their summit, she abides as their transcendental state (*taṭasthā*). She is established in (their) immanence (*tatpārśvasthā*) as the agent of the emission of the internal and external (sensory) organs. (Thus, she is) the Unrecited (*ajapā*) (Mantra). But even though She cannot be articulated, Her form is extensive. Her nature, Day and Night, her deployment engenders duality. She herself is the most excellent sacred site (*kṣetra*) because she destroys (*kṣapaṇa*) all the fetters and because she saves (*trāṇa*) all. Or, again, (one can say that) she is a sacred bathing site (*tīrthabhūmi*). Kurukṣetra and the like are not (in the deepest sense true) sacred places.

This is the state which is **'both transcendent and immanent (*parāparā*)'**. Being of the nature of (both) duality (as *aparā*) and non-duality (as *parā*), the (subjectivity of) 'I' (am is experienced as) predominant (as *parā*) and 'This' as secondary (and subordinate to it) (as *aparā*). In other words, there is non-duality of the words 'that' (i.e. objectivity) and 'I' (i.e. subjectivity) (when denoting the same reality), and duality by denoting (something as exclusively) 'this' and 'I'. Such is (the Goddess's) state of transcendence-cum-immanence (*parāparā*).

The Supreme Goddess as HAṀSA

The Supreme Goddess encompasses inwardly, the perceptible objects of denotation (*sphuṭavācya*), that is, the phonemes HA and SA. (But) during the phase when (the breath) enters (the body), she is above the head in the form of the nasal resonance (*anusvāra*) defined as 'AṂ'[447] of the phoneme HAṂ. (Thus) as just the Point (Ṁ), she cannot be recited (*ajapyā*). Similarly, in the phase of flowing outwards, (she is) on the side of the phoneme SAḤ as the aspiration which characterizes (the vowel) Ḥ.[448] (Then also), she cannot be

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[447] *Kalāpavyākaraṇam.*

[448] At the individual level, the breath travels up, resonating with the sound HAṀ. The end of its trajectory is Ṁ (the Point) in the End of the Twelve above the head. There it rests, entering into silence. Conversely, coming down the inhaled breath resonates with the sound SAḤ ending in Ḥ (*visarga*) in the Heart, where it enters into silence as the potency of emission (Ḥ) that is actualized in exhalation with (*Ḥ* >) HAṀ. At the universal level, when the individual is identified with the Supreme, the Sound is SO in ascent and HAṀ in descent.

recited (*ajapā*), as the double point (Ḥ) cannot be pronounced without the phoneme A.

The point here is that SAḤ is the sound of exhalation. When the flow of the inhaled breath (HAṀ) comes to rest in the heart, it is in the form of the resonance of Ṁ (*anusvāra*). Similarly, at the climax of exhalation (SAḤ), the breath resonates as Ḥ (*visarga*). Neither of the two can be pronounced independently by themselves without a preceding vowel and so are 'unpronounceable'. This is their state with respect to the other phonemes.[449]

Such is (her) unpronounceable state in terms of the ordered sequence of phonemes (*varṇakrama*). Otherwise, all words flash forth (in accord with) the sequence of the (dynamism of cognitive) consciousness (*saṃvitkrama*), that is, by the light of consciousness. There is no other (perceiving) consciousness (that observes and illumines that light). This is because it is its own light (that illumines itself) and so that flashing forth cannot be brought about by anything (other than the light of consciousness itself). This is because that which is its own light (and is self-illuminating) has no need of the light of (anything) else (in order to be made manifest), just as no other lamp (is required to illumine a shining) lamp.

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[449] The utterance of any word or Mantra is in accord with the sequence of its phonemes (*varṇakrama*) in the objective domain. At the deeper subjective level, this sequence is illumined by the process of perception, that is, the light of the sequence of consciousness (*saṁvitkrama*), and shines within the perceiver. While this light illumines the phonemes, it does not need another light to illumine it, it is self-illuminating. This aspect is represented by the Ḥ and Ṁ that resonate at the end of inhalation and exhalation, respectively. Immersed in transcendent consciousness, they are not articulated with the other, immanent phonemes, i.e. SA and HA. In other words, the breath travels through immanence. At the extremities of its flow, it comes to rest in transcendence. In the case of exhalation, the immanent flow is SA and Ḥ is the place of transcendental rest in the End of the Twelve above the head. In the case of inhalation, the downward flow from the End of the Twelve is HA. It enters into transcendence at the culmination of the resonance of Ṁ in the Heart. So SA and HA can be pronounced, whereas Ḥ and Ṁ cannot. This is true in terms of the 'sequence of letters'. These two vowels require the support of another prior vowel in order to be articulated. In terms of the 'sequence of consciousness', this means that they are the dynamism of transcendence set into the flow of the dynamism of immanence. This 'theory' is basic to the practice. What we understand conceptually at first matures into direct experience.

Surely (one may object): 'the mantra HAṀSA is the life (of the individual embodied) living being, so how can the reflective awareness of full (and universal) 'I' (consciousness) arise by his attending to the reflective awareness of just that Mantra alone? If (you ask this, then in response) we say that the venerable Maheśvarānanda has said (the following) in this regard:

'If (you) wish to know the perpetual, undifferentiated outpouring of (your) own heart, then when the Sun and Moon set, the intermediate instant (between them) (*madhyatuṭi*) should be split apart.'[450]

The Moon is the inhaled breath, which is the phoneme HA, because it nourishes all that is objective (*vedyavarga*). As it is the perceiving subject, (the exhaled breath) is the Sun, which is the phoneme SA. When the phonemes HAṂ (inhalation) and SAḤ (exhalation) have set (between inhalation and exhalation), the intermediate instant (between them), that is, between the two movements (of the breath), should be split through like the rubies on a necklace (are pierced by a thread). The phoneme SA sets in one's own heart, which is the aspirate (*visarjanīya*) (Ḥ) (at the end of SAḤ). If the phoneme HA rests in the *anusvāra* (Ṃ) (of HAṂ) that (initially, prior to exhalation) encapsulates one's own heart, then the intermediate instant (occurs).[451]

It is that fraction of time that is defined as the instant (*kṣaṇa*) which is the (temporal) state that is to be split apart. It is that which needs to be split apart.[452] (When this instant is also fragmented into the smallest possible

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[450] MM v. 56.

[451] It appears here that the order has been reversed. Up to here, SAḤ has been the sound of the exhaled breath ending in *visarga* (Ḥ) in the End of the Twelve. Conversely, inhalation is HAṀ ending in *anusvāra* (Ṁ) in the Heart. Here, SAḤ is inhalation that ends ('sets') in the Heart as Ḥ. HAṀ is exhalation that 'sets' in the End of the Twelve as Ṁ. In other words, in this case, Ḥ (*visarga*) is in the Heart and the Ṁ (*bindu*) is in the End of the Twelve. SAḤ begins at the End of the Twelve and ends in the Heart and HAṀ begins there, in the Heart, and ends in the End of the Twelve. The yogi should pay attention to the intermediate space between the two, both in the Heart and in the End of the Twelve. This is the centre. Splitting it to progressively more subtle measures, the yogi, attentive to the resonance of HAṀ SAḤ in the breath, develops to the reflective awareness that AHAṀ SAḤ—"I am He". Turning this around, it becomes SO'HAṀ. See the discussion below.

[452] The intermediate instant between the Sun of exhalation and the Moon of inhalation is in the heart. Here, as in the End of the Twelve, the flow of the breath stops.

extensions of time, time effectively ceases), then the reflective awareness arises that "I am He" (AHAṂ SAḤ). AHAṂ SAḤ (the breath of duality) is associated with the mantra HAṂSA (whereas) SO'HAM (the breath of non-duality), is the Great Mantra. It is that which should be reflected upon because it is the means to recognizing one's own (true) Self.

The two Dogs and the knowledge of Night and Day

(According to) Jayaratha, the repetition of Mantra, which is innate (spontaneous) and natural, is brought about by SA and HA, that is, by the two letters SA and HA. (It is said):

'(The letters) SA and HA are the knowledge of Night and Day, that move down and up (respectively).[453] They are said to dislike one another like a mad elephant and a ram. What can block them except the vitality (*vīrya*)[454] which is the great Unstruck Sound (*asvara*)?'

Here (in this passage), 'they are the knowledge of Night and Day' (*kṣapādinaāmānau*) means that by means of Night and Day, there is (complete) all-round (*ā*) knowledge (*manana*) (of all things at all times) within the two. (Thus), exhalation and inhalation are denoted in the scriptures as Day and Night, respectively. With this same intended (sense it is said in the) *Vīrāvalikula*:

It stops in this case at the end of the *visarga*—Ḥ of SAḤ—the flow of inhalation and Ṁ, which is linked to the flow of exhalation—HAṂ. In the first case—Ḥ—it is the end of inhalation and in the second case—Ṁ—it is at the beginning, just before exhalation. The two Ḥ and Ṁ need to be 'split apart' to interrupt the cycle of the breath and with it, of time marked by the alternation of the Day of exhalation and the Night of inhalation. This is done by a process of ever-deepening attention to that moment in that place.

453 In this case, SA is the Night, which is inhalation (*apāna*) and HA is the Day, which is exhalation (*prāṇa*). So here also, the two are reversed. This reversal, with respect to the most basic presentation, is attributed here to Jayaratha, well known as the author of a commentary called *Viveka* on the *Tantrāloka*.

454 'Vitality' (*vīrya*) here means the life force (*prāṇana*) that impels both inhalation and exhalation as it does the other forms of the breath of which it is their common nature. Here identified with Unstruck Sound (*asvara*–lit. Devoid of Vowels and hence unpronounceable), it rises as the silent resonance between the two breaths.

'Initiation (imparted by the experience of) pervasion, meditation and yoga takes place if the bright and dark (lunar fortnights) (*sitāsitau*), long and short, righteousness (*dharma*) and unrighteousness (*adharma*), day and night, cease.'[455]

White is Day, black is Night. The Day is long by the unfolding of the Light (of consciousness) and, by its contraction, the Night is short. Dharma (the order of things) belongs to the Day due to the multitude of authorizations (*adhikāra*) (to carry out) the prescriptions taught in the Vedas. The Night, on the contrary, is Adharma, for there is no authority (and responsibility to do) that.[456] Only the Sun possesses as its body the three (Vedas), not the Moon.

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[455] This is a paraphrase of a verse in the *Vīrāvalikula* quoted in TĀ 6/74cd-75ab. Still available in Śivopādhyāya's time, Jayaratha quotes the original more extensively in his commentary on the *Tantrāloka*, where we read:

sitāsitau ca yau pakṣau dīrghahrasvau ca kīrtitau |
dharmādharmamayau pāśau mahāghorau bhayānakau ||
dvayor yatra bhavec chedaḥ kṣayen [ch, ñ: kṣīyen] māyā tu yoginī |
kṣaye [ñ: kṣayaṃ] śūnyaṃ paraṃ jñeyaṃ dīkṣā hy eṣā prakīrtitā ||
nānyathā bhavate [ñ: bhavati] dīkṣā rajasāṃ pātane na tu |
naiva śāstrair bhaven muktir yajane [k, ch, ñ: śāstre-] naiva yājane [kh, ch, ñ: naiva yojane] ||
eṣā brahmavidāṃ dīkṣā nānyathā tu vadāmy aham |

'The bright and dark (*sitāsitau*) lunar fortnights, said to be long and short, the bonds made of righteousness and unrighteousness are very terrific (*ghora*) and frightening. Where the two are severed, Māyā, which conjoins (to the round of transmigration), ceases. One should know that (the reality that remains) when (Māyā) ceases is the Supreme Void. This is said to be initiation. Initiation cannot take place otherwise, if impurity does not fall away. Liberation is not (possible) by (just studying) the scriptures, performing rituals (oneself or) causing (others) to perform (them). This is the initiation of those who know the Brahman. I will explain it (as it truly is), not otherwise.'

TĀ 6/74cd-75ab is a paraphrase of the verses in the *Vīrāvalīkula* quoted by Jayaratha in the commentary. Śivopādhyāya quotes Abhinava's version of this citation here (VBh p. 138) and continues to quote from it and so it must have still been available in Kashmir in his day. Note, that according to this citation, the sound of inhalation is SA (> SO) and that of exhalation HA (> HAṀ), which is a major point Śivopādhyāya focuses on in his commentary.

[456] Whereas some Tantric rituals (especially Kaula ones) should be performed at

Exhalation and inhalation become tranquil by the retention of the breath. Yogis aspire (to this tranquillity, not the pairs of opposites). Thus, it is said here that 'these two should cease'. Otherwise (if they do not), life is stolen away uselessly and they engender the cause of the incessant flow of birth and death. In the Vedas and *smṛtis*, Day and Night are said to be (like two) dogs because they are the messengers of death, they steal away the span of life and because they do violence to people. And the same is (said in a) Brāhmaṇa:

'Indeed, these two are the dogs of Yama (the god of death). Yama's two dogs are Day and Night. These two, steal away people by the current, which is the two created by the inward entry (and exit) of the vital breath.'[457]

And so too, the *Yamasūkta* (Hymn to Yama, the Lord of Death):

'These, your two dogs, are Yama's protectors (of Day and Night). They have four eyes; they protect the wayfarer and watch over men. O king! due to them (men) lament. They take possession of the embodied and (their) health and

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night, Vedic rituals normally are not because it is considered to be an inauspicious time.

[457] The *Yamasūkta* (Ṛgveda 10/14) is a collection of mantras relating to the Pitṛmedha, which is performed once every other year in the memory of one's deceased father. It is performed in the constellation of Ekatara and in the constellations Chitra and others on the date of Amavasya in autumn, summer or Magha. The priest who performs the Pitṛmedha should make a pile of bones in a pot of the sons and grandsons of the deceased.

In the *Yamasūkta* of the *Ṛgveda*, Yama, the god of death, is portrayed as having two watchdogs whose mother is Śarmā. One is called Śārvara, which means variegated or spotted. The other is Śyāma, which means black or dark blue. The former is identified with the constellation *canis major* and the later, *canis minor*. Together, they guard the gates of the underworld, the domain of Yama and his palace. They are described as two ferocious, four-eyed dogs who view one another (*mithūdṛśā*) and those who come towards them. The *Atharvaveda* says that they are the messengers of Yama, who seek individuals who are about to die. The dead must get past them in order to enter Yama's presence to be judged by him and then go on to join their ancestors (*pitṛ*). They are also mentioned in a prayer addressed to Yama, in which the dead are requested to be entrusted to their protection, and are extolled as the guardians of the road.

See: Yamasukta or the Last Consolation: A translation (in poetry) of Ṛgveda *maṇḍala* 10, *sūkta* 14, Hira Lal Sood, 1911.

all that is good. They make a wave that is a fetter that encircles (men). They are the messengers of death that run after people. Oh! save us, we who contemplate the Sun that bestows what is good here below, and inebriates.'

(These two dogs of death) have four (*catura*) eyes corresponding to their skillful (*catura*) transformations: after day (follows) night and after that (follows) day. In this way, they alternate without a break. This is the meaning. They have four eyes like (the pits of) a dung well (*śakandhu*). (The word *catura* means 'four' and also) 'skillful' (such is) the rotation of their cycles (*cakra*). Analyzing (this word we observe that) there are two (parts). The word 'eye' denotes the cycles (*cakra*) (of the breath). By (this) 'cycle', one perceives the transformation (of the breath from inhalation to exhalation etc). (Thus, with regards to) the pair of cycles skillful (in this transformation, it is said):

'These two dogs, (one of) many colors, (the other) black, are born in the family of Vaivasvata (the Sun). I will offer these two the ball of rice (*piṇḍa*) (which is normally offered to the ancestors), may they do me no harm.'

(One) dog is dark brown and is the Night. The dog of many colors is the Day. This is because the Day has many colors for in the morning the light is red, at midday it is white and at sunset, dark blue. Here (in this context), Vaivasvata is death. (The two dogs) are the messengers of death because they are born from that house. They are its protectors and steal away peoples' lives. For that reason, I offer a ball (of rice), that is, a mouthful. It is the body made of the five gross elements and (by offering it) I renounce (my sense) of possessing (*mamatā*) (a body or anything else).

(Why is the cycle of Day and Night compared to a pair of dogs?) It is known that in everyday life, a dog is given balls of rice and other (food to eat). Due to the alternation of night and day, to which the body made of the gross elements (is subject), when it becomes old, it perishes. Thus, it is said (in the course of a funerary rites) that "I give this ball of rice" (that is, this body, to the dogs of death that they may be favorable to me).

On the contrary, my conscious nature (*cidrūpa*) is imperishable, for when (I have thus) integrated the cessation of the dynamism of exhalation and inhalation, those two dogs of the alternation of this dynamism may do (me) no harm. The harm they do does not occur. The optative (of the verbs in this verse is used in) the sense of possibility (to indicate that death cannot afflict one who has halted the flux of the breath). It is (thus) essential that one

should protect oneself directly by preventing the bites of (this) dog. Thus, if 'these two should cease' (by the practice of) Yoga and meditation, then initiation takes place, that is, the essence of (liberating) knowledge (is attained) and the destruction of the latent traces of (fetters that bind) the fettered soul. Such (is the sense of the root) *dik* (from which the word *dīkṣā*—'initiation' is derived).

Again, some teach that the Unstruck Sound (*asvara*) (mentioned in the verse cited above by Jayaratha) is the plane, which is the undivided Speech of Vision (*paśyanti*). As the venerable Vāmananātha declares:

'Having (first) contemplated Unstruck Sound devoid of the vital breath (between inhalation and exhalation) with the undivided Speech of Vision by the Yoga of contact with pure consciousness (*cinmātrasparśa*), he dissolves away into the supreme plane (of existence).'

Concerning its root (he says):

'Then arises Unstruck Sound (*asvara*)[458] which is the one universal light (*samāloka*) that gives birth to the seed of the energies (*kalā*) of Fire, Moon and Sun, present in the subject, object and means of knowledge (respectively).'

The 'object' (means) the object of knowledge as confirmed by the *Kramastotra*[459] (for), as the material cause (of all things), one should take (as one's) support the Supreme Goddess herself, who destroys space, time and form (that characterize objectivity). This same Goddess, her nature free of obscuring coverings, is said to be (the Buddhist Goddess) Prajñāpāramitā. That is said (by the Buddhists):

'Free of thought constructs, unmanifest, devoid of thought constructs, disease and 'own nature', she is supreme (*parā*), subtle, and devoid of Sound

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[458] The term *asvara* means both the 'vowel A' and 'without vowels'. The latter meaning is synonymous with the term *anacka* in which '*ac*' stands for the vowels and the privative prefix *an* means 'without'. It is not possible to articulate a phoneme without a vowel and so it denotes the Unstruck Sound of consciousness, which Kashmiri exegetes understand to be the self-awareness (*vimarśa*) of the universal Light of consciousness. When this arises it generates within itself the triad of Sun, Moon and Fire that represent the spheres of the means of knowledge, the object and the perceiver (see TĀ 3/122ab-124ab (3/121–123)).

[459] Presumably, Śivopādhyāya is referring here to the *Kramastotra* by Erakanātha which describes the thirteen Kālīs.

(*nāda*) and the Point (*bindu*), She is otherwise (called) Prajñāpāramitā, the supreme (Goddess) Parā who is the dawning of all the Buddhas.'[460]

This is itself the (transcendental) realm of the Void taught by Supreme Śiva everywhere (here) in the Tantra of Consciousness (*Vijnānatantra*). It is taught in other schools of philosophy (also) that the liberated state is that of the Void. We have ascertained that the direct experience (of that Emptiness that other schools maintain is brought about) by the power of contemplation is, according to the Śaiva scriptures, just a wandering about (from birth to birth) in the womb of Māyā (which is also a Void). Let this suffice.

In this realm of supreme (transcendence) and its (immanent) counterpart (*parāparabhūmi*), the bliss, which is the pulsing union of the phonemes SA and HA, is '**Great Bliss**'. He who '**following along and abiding**' in the sacrifice made of that (bliss), its nature, the reflective awareness of "I am he" (SO'HAM), is one with that Speech of Vision and, being so, is Parā by nature. This is the meaning.

(The Lord then) declares the number of mantras (of the form) HAṂSA (that means "I am he") that arise in one day and night saying '**twenty-one thousand six hundred ...**' (This recitation) '**is very hard to attain**' because the reflective awareness of the repetition of the mantra of (the supreme power of consciousness) that cannot be recited (*ajapā*) is (only) attained when the breath ceases[461] by virtue of the excellence (of the quantity) of the merit earned in (the course of) very many lifetimes. Such is the auspicious (end of this explanation) (*iti śivam*).

Discussion

Also called '*ajapa*'—'unrepeated' or 'unuttered', the mantra HAṂSAḤ can be heard by listening carefully to the sound of the breath. The word 'haṃsa' in common parlance denotes a kind of wild goose. Already in late Vedic texts, the word denotes the Self—*ātman*—implying that the Self and the breath were felt to be intimately connected. Indeed, the word *ātman* may be derived from

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[460] This citations can be understood, as Śivopādhyāya would like it to be, that the Buddhist goddess Prajñāpāramitā is the same as the Trika goddess Parā. He makes this equation right at the beginning of his commentary on these verses and stresses it again here.

[461] Read *prāṇanirvāṇa-* for *prāṇaniryāṇa-*.

the root *an* 'to breathe'. If there is any doubt about this etymology, strong evidence that it is correct is that in German, 'atman' means 'breathing'.

According to Swami Lakshmanjoo and almost everywhere in the commentaries, HAṂ is the sound of inhalation and SAḤ that of exhalation. Recited the other way around it makes the sound SO'HAṂ, which means 'I am He'. This is one of the most important and powerful practices. As all Mantras should be uttered in consonance with the breath, that is, paying attention to it, this practice can be said to be one of the most fundamental.

Despite the popularity and importance of the practice, there is some uncertainty, both in the later texts and amongst modern practitioners, as to whether the sounds of the breaths are not the other way around. According to the SvT 4/257 and Kṣemarāja's commentary, the sound of the exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) is (as one would expect the aspirate) HA (> HAṂ) and that of the inhaled breath (*apāna*) is SA (> SO). In his translation of the *Vijñānabhairava*, Jayadeva Singh inserts the following verse into the text of the printed edition:

sakāreṇa bahir yāti hakāreṇa viśet punaḥ |
haṃsa-haṃsety amuṃ mantraṃ jīvo japati nityaśaḥ ||

'(The breath) exits with the letter SA and should then enter again with the letter HA. (Thus), the individual soul constantly repeats the mantra 'HAṀSA, HAṀSA'.'

Although not found in the printed edition of the *Vijñānabhairava*, it is quite possible that this verse is drawn from it. Kṣemarāja quotes it in his commentary on the *Śivasūtra* (3/27). Although he does not identify his source, it is likely to be the *Vijñānabhairava*, because just as after this verse he goes on to quote VBh 156 (154cd-155ab) which is as follows.

'It is taught that the repeated recitation (*japa*) of the goddess (Who is the Mantra HAṂSAḤ) takes place 21,600 times in the course of one day and night. It is easy to attain (by the wise, but) too hard to acquire by the foolish (who lack awareness) (*jaḍa*).'

Clearly the two verses can be read as a pair (*yugma*). The first one apparently contradicts the authoritative *Svacchandatantra*. One wonders why that is. This same verse is found in the *Yogabīja* (verse 147), which postdates the *Vijñānabhairava* by some centuries. There, by way of a simple variant reading, it says, as the *Svacchandatantra* does, that the breath exits with letter H, not

S, and enters with the letter S, not H (*hakāreṇa bahir yāti sakāreṇa viśet punaḥ*). There we read:

'The breath goes out with (the sound of) the letter HA and should enter again with (the sound of) the letter SA. This is the mantra HAṀSA, HAṀSA all living beings repeat (constantly).'[462] (147)

This reading is supported by the *Niruttaratantra*, which states that:

haṃkāreṇa bahir yāti saḥkāreṇa viśet punaḥ |
haṃsaṃ tu paramaṃ mantraṃ jīvo japati sarvadā ||

'The breath goes out with (the sound of) the letter HAṀ and should enter again with (the sound of) the letter SAḤ. (Thus), the individual soul constantly repeats the supreme mantra 'HAṀSA,'.'[463]

Although the verse we are discussing is not found in either Śivopādhyāya's version of the *Vijñānabhairava* or in Ānandabhaṭṭa's, even so, it appears from Śivopādhyāya's extensive commentary on VBh 156 (154) that he knew it in the form we find it nowadays in the printed edition of Kṣemarāja's commentary on the *Śivasūtra*. Thus, he begins by explaining that HAṂSA is the natural sound of the breath. HAṂ is the sound of inhalation and SAḤ the sound of exhalation. Together they make HAṂSAḤ, which he identifies with the Trika goddess Parā who, he says, is referred to in that form in VBh 24 and 81. He writes that 'the exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) is SAḤ. In this form, the Light (of consciousness) 'exits', that is, flows out (manifesting outer objectivity). The living being (the inhaled breath) (*jīva*) is 'AHAM' (I); in this modality, it is the Night (of the absence of objectivity). When the exhaled breath flows out and the inhaled breath enters in, there is life ...'[464] Further ahead he says: 'The Moon is the inhaled breath, which is the phoneme HA, because it nourishes all that is objective (*vedyavarga*). As it is the perceiving subject, (the exhaled breath) is the Sun, which is the phoneme SA.'[465]

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[462] *Yogabīja* verse 147, quoted in *Roots of Yoga* Translated and edited with an introduction by James Mallinson and Mark Singletron. Penguin Random House UK 2017 p. 32

[463] Quoted by Silburn 1961: notes p. 40

[464] *prāṇaḥ saḥ ity evaṃrūpaḥ prakāśo vrajet bahiḥ niḥsaret jīvaḥ aham ity evaṃprakāraḥ kṣapārūpaḥ, prāṇasya bahirniḥsaraṇe apānasya antaḥpraveśane jīvātmatā saṃbhavati iti*

[465] *somaḥ apāno-hakāraḥ sakalavedyavargapoṣakatvāt, jñātṛtvāt sakārātmā sūryaḥ*

It seems to me that the simplest and most satisfactory explanation for this conflict in the sources is simply scribal error. Although I maintain the common reading in the commentators, I take the correct version to be the one reported in the *Yogabīja*. If it drew this verse from the *Vijñānabhairava*, or a common source, it is possible that it retained an older, better reading. While the matter is easily solved in this way for the sources that belong to the Yogaśāstra of the Haṭha Yoga tradition, as does the *Yogabīja*, confusion remains elsewhere about which way round the sounds go. Thus, we have seen that Swami Lakshmanjoo, taught that exhalation is SAḤ (> SO) and inhalation is HAṂ, and so did Muktānanda, who followed his lead, and Gurumayi continues to do. The practice taught as a part of Kriyāyoga by the followers of Yogānanda and other modern teachers, such as the Sikh Caraṇ Singh of Sant Maṭh and Yogi Bhajan, as well as Revant Singh ('Guru Maharaji'), the sounds are the other way around. All of them teach SO'HAM, rather than HAṂSA and that SO is inhalation and HAṂ is exhalation.

Whether exhalation is SA (SO) or HAṂ, seems to have been a problem from early on. Thus, it appears that the author of the *Yogabīja* (148) feels obliged to offer an explanation for the difference between the practice of HAṂSA and SO'HAṂ. He does this by maintaining that there are two types of breathing. One is outside the central channel of *suṣumnā*. In this kind of breathing, the sound of the breath is HAṂSA. The other kind of breathing is within the channel of *suṣumnā*. Thus, the *Yogabīja* declares that: 'According to the guru's teaching, the repetition is reversed in the central channel (*suṣumnā*), and becomes SO'HAṂ, SO'HAM.'[466] However, in both cases exhalation is HAṂ and inhalation SAḤ / SO.

The extensive and detailed practice of attention on the breathing cycle taught in chapter six of the *Tantrāloka*, drawn largely from the *Svacchandatantra*, is not just understood as being a yogic practice, which it obviously is, but it is also perceived to be a ritual. As such, Abhinavagupta heralds it, as rituals commonly are, by the priest preparing himself by tying the top knot on his head. Once done, it remains tied throughout the rite, thus maintaining the vital breaths within him and as a token of his resolute attention. Indeed, that is especially required when practicing attention to the flow of the cycles of the vital breath. Whatever be the projections onto the breath, they are all based

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[466] *Roots of Yoga* p. 32

on maintaining close attention to its movement. Thus, after Abhinava says the following, Jayaratha quotes VBh 156 (154).

'This is how the topknot is tied, that is, by the repeated (and constant application of) awareness to each movement of the power of the vital breath, by paying attention to the beginning, middle and end (of each one).'[467]

Those who are fit to receive the teachings

इत्येतत्कथितं देवि परमामृतमुत्तमम् ।
एतच्च नैव कस्यापि प्रकाश्यम् तु कदाचन ॥ १५७ ॥
परशिष्ये खले क्रूरे अभक्ते गुरुपादयोः ।
निर्विकल्पमतीनां तु वीराणामुन्नतात्मनाम् ॥ १५८ ॥
भक्तानां गुरुवर्गस्य दातव्यं निर्विशङ्कया ।

ity etat kathitaṃ devi paramāmṛtam uttamam |
etac ca naiva kasyāpi prakāśyam tu kadācana || 157 ||
paraśiṣye khale krūre abhakte gurupādayoḥ |
nirvikalpamatīnāṃ tu vīrāṇām unnatātmanām || 158 ||
bhaktānāṃ guruvargasya dātavyaṃ nirviśaṅkayā |

Thus, O Goddess! I have told (you about) this most excellent, supreme (immortal) nectar (of immortality). It should never be disclosed to anyone who is a disciple of another (tradition), who is evil and cruel, and is not devoted to (his) master's feet. (But this teaching) should certainly be given without hesitation to those elevated adepts (*vīra*) whose mind is free of thought and are devoted to the masters. (157–159ab) (155cd-157)

Word-for-word meaning: *ity* Thus, *devi* O Goddess, *kathitaṃ* I have told (you about) *etat* this *uttamam* most excellent *paramāmṛtam* supreme (immortal) nectar *ca* and *etac* it *naiva kadācana* should never be *prakāśyam* disclosed *kasyāpi* to anyone *paraśiṣye* who is the disciple of another (tradition), *khale* who is evil, *krūre* cruel, *abhakte* not devoted *gurupādayoḥ* to (his) master's feet. *dātavyaṃ tu* (But this teaching) should certainly be given *nirviśaṅkayā* without hesitation *unnatātmanām* to those elevated *vīrāṇām* adepts *nirvikalpamatīnāṃ* whose mind is free of thought *bhaktānāṃ* and are devoted *guruvargasya* to the masters.

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[467] TĀ 6/23cd-24ab

Ānandabhaṭṭa

This secret knowledge should be given (only) '**to those elevated adepts whose mind is free of thought**', that is, who have severed (all) doubts and, grounded in pure knowledge, are beyond Māyā and devoted to the lineages of masters belonging to the Divine Current, the Current of Siddhas and that of Men.[468]

Discussion

We may understand that the Deity is referring to all the teachings, that is, meditations of the *Vijñānabhairava*, as the 'most excellent, supreme (immortal) nectar (of immortality).' Equally, he could be referring just to the practice outlined in the previous verses. Although technically not amongst the 112 meditations, it is linked to the first of them and can be understood as supplying additional details to the practice taught there. In verse 24, the yogi is directed only to paying attention to the places where the inhaled and exhaled breaths originate, towards which they move and from which they fall away, thereby filling one another. Here, the practice is to listen to the sound of their movement.

The supreme value of the teachings

ग्रामो राज्यं पुरं देशः पुत्रदारकुटुम्बकम् ॥ १५९ ॥
सर्वमेतत्परित्यज्य ग्राह्यमेतन्मृगेक्षणे ।
किमेभिरस्थिरैर्देवि स्थिरं परमिदं धनम् ॥ १६० ॥
प्राणा अपि प्रदातव्या न देयं परमामृतम् ।

grāmo rājyaṃ puraṃ deśaḥ putradārakuṭumbakam || 159 ||
sarvam etat parityajya grāhyam etan mṛgekṣaṇe |
kim ebhir asthirair devi sthiraṃ param idaṃ dhanam || 160 ||
prāṇā api pradātavyā na deyaṃ paramāmṛtam |

O Gazelle-eyed One! having abandoned all this, namely, (one's) village, kingdom, city and country, son, wife and family, one should lay hold of this (teaching). O Goddess! What is the use of these impermanent things? (Only) this supreme wealth is permanent. One can even give (one's) vital breaths (to

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[468] This typically Kaula arrangement of the lineages of teachers is not found in the *Vijñānabhairava*, it is Śivopādhyāya's late interpretation. Note also that the text refers here to adepts as *vīras*. This appellation precedes the formation of Kaulism as a distinct category.

others but) one should not give (this), the supreme nectar (of immortality). (159cd-161ab) (158–159)

Word-for-word meaning: *mṛgekṣaṇe* O Gazelle-eyed One! *parityajya* having abandoned *sarvam* all *etat* this, *grāmo* (one's) village, *rājyaṃ* kingdom, *puraṃ* city, *deśaḥ* country, *putradārakuṭumbakam* son, wife and family, *grāhyam* one should lay hold of *etan* this (teaching). *devi* O Goddess, *kim* what (is the use of) *ebhir* these *asthirair* impermanent things? *idaṃ* (Only) this *param* supreme *dhanam* wealth *sthiraṃ* is permanent. *api pradātavyā* One can even give *prāṇā* (one's) vital breaths (to others but) *na deyaṃ* one should not give *paramāmṛtam* (this), the supreme nectar (of immortality).

Ānandabhaṭṭa

By renouncing the impermanent wealth of the kingdom and the like and the transitory things associated with it, one should lay hold of the permanent wealth, which is the fruit of the most excellent bliss (*anuttarasukha*) (of absolute reality) that, imperishable, follows (as a consequence of that renunciation). That should be given in all respects to the fitting receptacles to whom the teaching has been imparted.

Gratitude for the teachings

श्रीदेवी उवाच
देवदेव महादेव परितृप्तास्मि शंकर ॥ १६१ ॥
रुद्रयामलतन्त्रस्य सारमद्यावधारितम् ।
सर्वशक्तिप्रभेदानां हृदयं ज्ञातमद्य च ॥ १६२ ॥
इत्युक्त्वानन्दिता देवी कण्ठे लग्ना शिवस्य तु ॥ १६३ ॥

śrīdevī uvāca

devadeva mahādeva paritṛptāsmi śaṃkara || 161 ||
rudrayāmalatantrasya sāram adyāvadhāritam |
sarvaśaktiprabhedānāṃ hṛdayaṃ jñātam adya ca || 162 ||
ity uktvānanditā devī kaṇṭhe lagnā śivasya tu |

The Goddess said:

O God of the gods, O Great God! O Śaṅkara! I am completely satisfied. Today I have understood the essence of the *Rudrayāmala Tantra*. Today I have (come

to) know the heart of all the various kinds of energies. Having said this, the Goddess, (thus) made blissful, embraced Śiva indeed. (161cd-163ab) (160–161)

Word-for-word meaning: *devadeva* O God of the gods, *mahādeva* O Great God! *śaṃkara* O Śaṅkara! *paritṛptāsmi* (I am) completely satisfied. *adyāvadhāritam* Today I have understood *sāram* the essence *rudrayāmalatantrasya* of the *Rudrayāmala Tantra adya ca* and today *jñātam* (I have come to) know *hṛdayaṃ* the heart *sarvaśaktiprabhedānāṃ* of all the various kinds of energies. *ity uktvānanditā* Having said this, made blissful, *devī* the Goddess *kaṇṭhe lagnā* embraced *Śivasya* Śiva *tu* indeed.

Ānandabhaṭṭa

Having attained by the grace of Śrīvidyā a modest insight into the Trika Tantras and, reflected on them, observing that the sense of the compendium of realities (it teaches) is very extensive, (I) Bhaṭṭānanda have written this (commentary called) *Vijñānakaumudī* that awakens (to the meaning of) the words of the profound path of the *Vijñānabhairava* composed in order to protect from falling into the terrible chasm and the darkness of phenomenal existence. (It was written on) *vedasaptarṣivedāntyayugābdamadhupakṣatau.*[469] This commentary on the *Vijñānabhairava* called *Vijñānakaumudī* is complete. It is the work of the venerable Kashmiri Bhaṭṭāraka Ānanda.

[469] Editor's Note: This was left untranslated in the Mark Dyczkowski's manuscript. Tentatively this means "In the Kali-yuga, in the year 47, in the month of Madhu, during its fortnight", but from merely this description it is not possible to determine the exact dates.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

THE MEDITATIONS OF THE VIJÑĀNABHAIRAVA TANTRA IN THE PUBLISHED SERIAL ORDER

This and the following appendix present the meditations without commentaries and elaboration. If the reader has laboured through the introduction and then the presentation, he may well feel saturated and burdened with many unfinished and perplexing thoughts. Most commonly, for obvious reasons, the meditations are read one at a time and the practitioner, guided by others or alone, attempts to understand the practice and then does it. Generally, the instruction is very concise and surprisingly complex. Often it seems that we can understand the instruction easily, only to discover when we try to follow it that countless questions arise, some that are harder to articulate than the instruction itself. We generally tackle the meditations one at a time. The way they are presented encourages us to approach the meditations that way, that is, each complete in itself, guiding us to an experience.

However, as the saying goes, the only way to know the taste of an orange is to taste it. Even the simplest experience defies description. But once you have tasted an orange, it is easy to evoke its flavour. In the case of a meditative experience, where do we go to acquire it? Even if we meet someone who has had it many times, how can I get it from him or her? Reading about it in a book is even harder. Indeed, is it possible? How do I know that I am tasting orange and not some other unknown fruit? Is my experience of the orange like yours? Or that of the teacher, if I have one? If someone tells me that there is a chair in the room next door, I can easily check if that statement is correct. But that is always and inevitably done by way of experience. The experience of understanding the statement—"there is a chair in the other room"—is compared with the experience of actually seeing that the chair is there.

The object of meditation is not physical or even mental. It is, for want of a better word, 'metaphysical'. Language represents its object or 'meaning' with the appropriate words.

oṃ namaś cidbhairavapuṣe svātmaśaṃbhave ||

Oṃ! Salutation to one's own Śiva nature, the body of which is the Bhairava of Consciousness.

Introduction

श्रुतं देव मया सर्वं रुद्रयामलसंभवम् ।
त्रिकभेदमशेषेण सारात्सारविभागशः ॥ १ ॥
अद्यापि न निवृत्तो मे संशयः परमेश्वर ।

Śrīdevyuvāca:

śrutaṃ deva mayā sarvaṃ rudrayāmalasaṃbhavam |
trikabhedam aśeṣeṇa sārāt sāraṃ vibhāgaśaḥ || 1 ||
ādyāpi na nivṛtto me saṃśayaḥ parameśvara |

The Goddess said:

O God, I have heard all that has originated from the *Rudrayāmala* (Tantra) that is, the Trika category (of your revelation). (But although I have heard) the essence of its essence entirely, part by part, (rising through the higher levels of scripture), even now, O Supreme Lord, my doubt has not been quelled. (1–2ab)

किं रूपं तत्त्वतो देव शब्दराशिकलामयम् ॥ २ ॥
किं वा नवात्मभेदेन भैरवे भैरवाकृतौ ।
त्रिशिरोभेदभिन्नं वा किं वा शक्तित्रयात्मकम् ॥ ३ ॥

kiṃ rūpaṃ tattvato deva śabdarāśikalāmayam || 2 ||
kiṃ vā navātmabhedena bhairave bhairavākṛtau |
triśirobhedabhinnaṃ vā kiṃ vā śaktitrayātmakam || 3 ||

O god, what, in actual fact, is (Bhairava's real) form (*rūpa*)? (Does) it consist of the energies of the Assembly of (the fifty phonemic) Sounds (*śabdarāśi*)? Or else is it within Bhairava's (frightening) form as the (Bhairava) Navātman? Or is it the special (diverse) (*bhinna*) (Trika mantras taught) in the *Triśiro-bhairavatantra*? Or is it the three energies (Parā, Parāparā and Aparā) (over whom He presides)? (2cd-3)

नादबिन्दुमयं वापि किं चन्द्रार्धनिरोधिकाः ।
चक्रारूढमनच्चकं वा किं वा शक्तिस्वरूपकम् ॥ ४ ॥

nādabindumayaṃ vāpi kiṃ candrārdhanirodhikāḥ |
cakrārūḍham anackaṃ vā kiṃ vā śaktisvarūpakam || 4 ||

Or is it made of Sound (*nāda*) and the Point (*bindu*)? Or is it the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*) and the Obstructress (*nirodhikā*) (and the other subtle levels of the utterance of OṀ)? Or is it the Unstruck Sound (of the consonants), mounted on the Wheel (of the vowels) or else is it *śakti*? (4)

परापरायाः सकलम् अपरायाश्च वा पुनः ।
पराया यदि तद्वत्स्यात् परत्वं तद्विरुध्यते ॥ ५ ॥

parāparāyāḥ sakalam aparāyāśca vā punaḥ |
parāyā yadi tadvat syāt paratvaṃ tad virudhyate || 5 ||

On the contrary, if Parā were to have a differentiated form (*sakala*) like that of Parāparā or Aparā that would contradict her (supreme) absolute status (*paratva*). (5)

न हि वर्णविभेदेन देहभेदेन वा भवेत् ।
परत्वं निष्कलत्वेन सकलत्वे न तद्भवेत् ॥ ६ ॥
प्रसादं कुरु मे नाथ निःशेषं छिन्धि संशयम् ।

na hi varṇavibhedena dehabhedena vā bhavet |
paratvaṃ niṣkalatvena sakalatvaṃ na tadbhavet || 6 ||
prasādaṃ kuru me nātha niḥśeṣaṃ chindhi saṃśayam |

Differentiated by the phonemes (of mantras) or by a bodily form (Parā would not possess that supreme) absolute status. (Essentially) undifferentiated by nature, it cannot be made of parts (such that Parā may have an iconic form). O Lord, be gracious and dispel my doubts entirely. (6–7ab)

श्रीभैरव उवाच
साधु साधु त्वया पृष्टं तन्त्रसारमिदं प्रिये ॥ ७ ॥
गूहनीयतमं भद्रे तथापि कथयामि ते ।

Bhairava uvāca:

sādhu sādhu tvayā pṛṣṭaṃ tantrasāram idaṃ priye || 7 ||
gūhanīyatamaṃ bhadre tathāpi kathayāmi te |

The venerable Bhairava said:

Well done! Well done! O dear one, you have asked about this, (the answer to which is the very) essence of the Tantras. O virtuous one! this (knowledge) should be kept most secret, but even so I will tell it to you. (7cd-8ab)

यत्किंचित्सकलं रूपं भैरवस्य प्रकीर्तितम् ॥ ८ ॥
तदसारतया देवि विज्ञेयं शक्रजालवत् ॥
मायास्वप्नोपमं चैव गन्धर्वनगरभ्रमम् ॥ ९ ॥

yat kiṃcit sakalaṃ rūpaṃ bhairavasya prakīrtitam || 8 ||
tad asāratayā devi vijñeyaṃ śakrajālavat |
māyāsvapnopamaṃ caiva gandharvanagarabhramam || 9 ||

O Goddess, whatever is said to be Bhairava's differentiated (*sakala*) (iconic) form, it has no essence and so should be known (to be deceptive) like Indra's (magic) net and like the dream of Māyā, the mistaken belief in the (non-existent) city of Gandharvas (in the sky). (8cd-9)

ध्यानार्थं भ्रान्तबुद्धीनां क्रियाडम्बरवर्तिनाम् ।
केवलं वर्णितं पुंसां विकल्पनिहतात्मनाम् ॥ १० ॥

dhyānārthaṃ bhrāntabuddhīnāṃ kriyāḍambaravartinām |
kevalaṃ varṇitaṃ puṃsāṃ vikalpanihatātmanām || 10 ||

(Some form of Bhairava) is described only so that people engaged in the turmoil of ritual, whose minds are confused and are overwhelmed by (the dichotomies) thought, (may) meditate (on Him). (10)

तत्त्वतो न नवात्मासौ शब्दराशिर्न भैरवः ।
न चासौ त्रिशिरा देवो न च शक्तित्रयात्मकः ॥ ११ ॥

tattvato na navātmāsau śabdarāśirna bhairavaḥ |
na cāsau triśirā devo na ca śaktitrayātmakaḥ || 11 ||

In reality, Bhairava is neither (ninefold as) Navātman, nor (is he) (Śabdarāśi-bhairava) the aggregate of (phonemic) sounds; and nor is he (Triśirobhairava) the three-headed God nor is he the three energies (Parā, Parāparā and Aparā).[1] (11)

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[1] The point Bhairava is stressing is that in the practice taught here the deities are not,

as they are normally in the Tantras, Mantras. Tantric practice is extensively concerned with the recitation of Mantras both independently (in the form of repeated recitation (*japa*) and projection onto the body (*nyāsa*)) and in the context of ritual. Here, Bhairava has selected as his examples the most powerful Trika triad of mantras—those of the goddesses Parā, Parāparā and Aparā—along with Navātmabhairava, who is the syllabic form of Svacchandabhairava, who is so prominent one could say that he is THE Bhairava. Along with them he refers to the phases of higher resonances of a seed syllable Mantra like OṂ. These are all considered to be differentiated iconic forms of the Mantra deities. For those who are dedicated to the practices of meditation he is going to teach, they are not ultimate. They belong to the same illusory world from which Bhairava seeks to free the aspirant. In this way he accounts for why the meditations he will go on to teach are very unusual Tantric teaching insofar as they are is devoid of Mantra.

Does that mean that the huge bulk of the Tantras and the Mantras they teach are misleading? Is the Deity itself leading the devotee there along the misguided Path of Mantra (*mantramārga*)? The answer, we are relieved to hear, is no. Mantras do serve an important function, but not an ultimate one. The teachings of the Tantras, which are generally so centred on Mantra that they are called the Path of Mantra, serve to encourage the less developed aspirant and coax him on to the higher path of meditation. It is important to note, in order to avoid confusion, that although Bhairava says this, there are several meditations that apparently involve various manipulations and application of Mantra and the parts thereof. But these are invariably short syllabic Mantras on the model of OṂ, the foremost amongst them. Called '*praṇava*' (the bow), it lends its name to the major 'seed syllable'—*bīja*—Mantras such as HRĪṂ, ŚRĪṂ and HŪṂ. These, the *Vijñānabhairava* uses as sacred sounds on which to meditate and as vehicles to transport the mind into the Silence of the Emptiness of pure consciousness. Thus we are instructed:

O Bhairavī, by uttering a *praṇava* or the like and by meditating on the void at the end of (its) prolated sound, (the yogi) attains Emptiness by means of the Void which is (Śiva's) supreme power. (39) (see also VBh 30)

Similarly, the meditation taught in verse 42 directs that 'by uttering the Void (at the end) of the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), the Point (*bindu*), Sound (*nāda*), and the End (of Sound) of an entire syllabic (*piṇḍa*) mantra in accord with the sequence of (its) gross letters, (the yogi) certainly becomes Śiva.'

So it appears at first sight that the yogi is directed to meditate on the phases of Sound but here too, the object of his meditation is the Void at the end of them. In the same way, the *Vijñānabhairava* also teaches meditation on the sound of certain phonemes, including those that constitute the name of Bhairava that the practitioner is told to repeat. One may well wonder whether these also belong to the same

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In reality, Bhairava is neither (ninefold as) Navātman, nor (is he) (Śabdarāśibhairava) the aggregate of (phonemic) sounds; and nor is he (Triśirobhairava) the three-headed God nor the three energies (Parā, Parāparā and Aparā). (11)

नादबिन्दुमयो वापि न चन्द्रार्धनिरोधिकाः ।
न चक्रक्रमसंभिन्नो न च शक्तिस्वरूपकः ॥ १२ ॥

nādabindumayo vāpi na candrārdhanirodhikāḥ |
na cakrakramasaṃbhinno na ca śaktisvarūpakaḥ || 12 ||

He is neither Sound (*nāda*) nor the Point (*bindu*), not the Half Moon (nor) the Obstructress. He is not differentiated by the sequence of the wheel (of combinations with the vowels), nor is Śakti His nature. (12)

अप्रबुद्धमतीनां हि एता बालविभीषिकाः ।
मातृमोदकवत्सर्वं प्रवृत्त्यर्थमुदाहृतम् ॥ १३ ॥

aprabuddhamatīnāṃ hi etā bālavibhīṣikāḥ |
mātṛmodakavat sarvaṃ pravṛttyartham udāhṛtam || 13 ||

These (notions of His nature) are for those whose intellect has not awakened, (that serve to dispel their doubts that are like) the things that frighten children. All (this) is said to impel (them) to act (for their own advancement) like a sweet (that) a mother (offers a child). (13)

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category. In other words, is Bhairava teaching beginners practices in such cases that are not ultimate? Or, indeed, are all the practices such? To find the answer we need to read what Bhairava is saying carefully. The references to Mantra all concern the nature of himself and the goddess, who invariably accompanies him. We have noted many times that the deities of the Tantras are Mantras. This is their *sakala*—differentiated—form which is the object of worship. However, Bhairava insists that worship entails accepting, indeed clinging, to highest teachings of oneness. Put in another way, the *Vijñānabhairava* teaches the practice centred on the *niskala*—undifferentiated—form of the deity. The *sakala* form has no essence and as deceptive as like Indra's magic, the dream of Māyā, or the mistaken belief in the existence a city of celestial musicians—Gandharvas—in the sky. (VBh 8–9)

दिक्कालकलनोन्मुक्ता देशोद्देशाविशेषिणी ।
व्यपदेष्टुमशंक्यासावकथ्या परमार्थतः ॥ १४ ॥
अन्तः स्वानुभवानन्दा विकल्पोन्मुक्तगोचरा ।
यावस्था भरिताकारा भैरवी भैरवात्मनः ॥ १५ ॥
तद्वपुस्तत्त्वतो ज्ञेयं विमलं विश्वपूरणम् ।

dikkālakalanonmuktā deśoddeśāviśeṣiṇī |
vyapadeṣṭum aśakyāsāv akathyā paramārthataḥ || 14 ||
antaḥsvānubhavānandā vikalponmuktagocarā |
yāvasthā bharitākārā bhairavī bhairavātmanaḥ || 15 ||
tadvapus tattvato jñeyaṃ vimalaṃ viśvapūraṇam |

Free of the diversification of space and time, unspecified (by any) designation of place, (the goddess) cannot be described. (Indeed) she is ultimately inexpressible. Bhairavī is the bliss of one's own inner (*antar*) experience of oneself. (Her) state is completely free of (all) conceptions (and is the) state of Bhairava's own nature which is (her) form that is (absolutely) full (and perfect). One should know that body as it truly is (not in any iconic form but as) immaculate and replenishing all things. (14–16ab)

एवंविधे परे तत्त्वे कः पूज्यः कश्च तृप्यति ॥ १६ ॥

evaṃvidhe pare tattve kaḥ pūjyaḥ kaśca tṛpyati || 16 ||

Within such a supreme (absolute) reality, what (can be) the object of worship and who is satisfied (thereby)? (16cd)

एवंविधा भैरवस्य यावस्था परिगीयते ।
सा परा पररूपेण परादेवी प्रकीर्तिता ॥ १७ ॥

evaṃvidhā bhairavasya yāvasthā parigīyate |
sā parā pararūpeṇa parādevī prakīrtitā || 17 ||

That state, which is such, lauded (in the scriptures) as that of Bhairava, is supreme and as its nature is supreme (*para*), it is called the Goddess Parā. (17)

शक्तिशक्तिमतोर्यद्वत् अभेदः सर्वदा स्थितः ।
अतस्तद्धर्मधर्मित्वात् परा शक्तिः परात्मनः ॥ १८ ॥

śaktiśaktimator yadvat abhedaḥ sarvadā sthitaḥ |
tathā taddharmadharmitvāt parā śaktiḥ parātmanaḥ || 18 ||

Just as there is a constant state of oneness between Śakti and its possessor, in the same way the power of the Supreme Self (*parātman*) is the Supreme (goddess) because She possesses His same (supreme) nature. (18)

न वह्नेर्दाहिका शक्तिः व्यतिरिक्ता विभाव्यते ।
केवलं ज्ञानसत्तायां प्रारम्भोऽयं प्रवेशने ॥ १९ ॥

na vahner dāhikā śaktiḥ vyatiriktā vibhāvyate |
kevalaṃ jñānasattāyāṃ prārambho'yaṃ praveśane || 19 ||

The power to burn is not perceived to be different from fire when (there is) only (just) the perception (of fire). When entering into the (essential) being of insight (into their true nature), this (distinction between Śiva and His power) is only the beginning. (19)

शक्त्यवस्थाप्रविष्टस्य निर्विभागेन भावना ।
तदासौ शिवरूपी स्यात् शैवी मुखमिहोच्यते ॥ २० ॥

śaktyavasthāpraviṣṭasya nirvibhāgena bhāvanā |
tadāsau śivarūpī syāt śaivī mukham ihocyate || 20 ||

The contemplation (*bhāvanā*) of one who has entered (the supreme) Śakti's state is (one with Śiva) undivided. Then he is Śiva. Śiva's power (*śaivī*) is said here (in the scriptures) to be (His) mouth (*mukha*) (which is the entrance to the realization of one's own Śiva nature). (20)

यथालोकेन दीपस्य किरणैर्भास्करस्य च ।
ज्ञायते दिग्विभागादि तद्वच्छक्त्या शिवः प्रिये ॥ २१ ॥

yathālokena dīpasya kiraṇair bhāskarasya ca |
jñāyate digvibhāgādi tadvacchaktyā śivaḥ priye || 21 ||

Just as the directions and (their) divisions etc are known by the light of a lamp and the rays of the sun, in the same way, O beloved, Śiva (is known) by (means of His) power (Śakti). (21)

श्रीदेवी उवाच
देवदेव त्रिशूलाङ्क कपालकृतभूषण ।
दिग्देशकालशून्या च व्यपदेशविवर्जिता ॥ २२ ॥
यावस्था भरिताकारा भैरवस्योपलभ्यते ।
कैरुपायैर्मुखं तस्य परादेवी कथं भवेत् ॥ २३ ॥
यथा सम्यगहं वेद्मि तथा मे ब्रूहि भैरव ।

śrīdevyuvāca:

devadeva triśūlāṅka kapālakṛtabhūṣaṇa |
digdeśakālaśūnyā ca vyapadeśavivarjitā || 22 ||
yāvasthā bharitākārā bhairavasyopalabhyate |
kair upāyair mukhaṃ tasya parā devī kathaṃ bhavet || 23 ||
yathā samyag ahaṃ vedmi tathā me brūhi bhairava |

O God of the gods, whose emblem is the trident and who has made skulls (his) ornament, what are the (various) means by which the supreme state that is free from (any sense of) direction, space and time and that cannot be described, and is Bhairava's state of plenitude, be realized? How can the Supreme Goddess (*parā devī*) be his mouth (through which to enter into him)? O Bhairava, pray tell me (this), so that I may know it properly. (22–24ab)

The Meditations

1) Filling the Places the Breaths Originate

ऊर्ध्वे प्राणो ह्यधो जीवो विसर्गात्मा परोच्चरेत् ।
उत्पत्तिद्वितयस्थाने भरणाद्भरिता स्थितिः ॥ २४ ॥

ūrdhve prāṇo hy adho jīvo visargātmā paroccaret |
utpattidvitayasthāne bharaṇāt bharitā sthitiḥ || 24 ||

The exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) (*haṃ*) is above and the living being (the inhaled breath) (*jīva*) (*saḥ*) is below; (the goddess) Parā who is emission (*visarga*), is uttering forth (and manifesting in this way) within the two places where they originate. (The yogi attains) the state of fullness by filling (them). (24)

2) Abiding in the Two Voids from which the Breaths Originate

मरुतोऽन्तर्बहिर्वापि वियद्युग्मानिवर्तनात् ।
भैरव्या भैरवस्येत्थं भैरवि व्यज्यते वपुः ॥ २५ ॥

maruto 'antarbahirvāpi vidydutyugmānivartanāt |
bhairavyā bhairavasyetthaṁ bhairavi vyajate vapuḥ || 25 ||

O Bhairavī, by not returning out from the two voids of the breath, whether internal or external, Bhairavī reveals in this way Bhairava's body. (25)

3) Stilling the Breaths by Attending to the Centre

न व्रजेन्न विशेच्छक्तिर्मरुद्रूपा विकासिते ।
निर्विकल्पतया मध्ये तया भैरवरूपता ॥ २६ ॥

na vrajen na viśec chaktir marudrūpā vikāsite |
nirvikalpatayā madhye tayā bhairavarūpatā || 26 ||

The energy in the form of the vital breath should neither exit nor enter when the centre has unfolded (*vikāsite*) by the (one pointed) state free of thought (that places them there and abides there). (Thus there,) by that (same power, the Yogi's) Bhairava nature (is made manifest). (26)

4) Mild Breath Retention

कुम्भिता रेचिता वापि पूरिता वा यदा भवेत् ।
तदन्ते शान्तनामासौ शक्त्या शान्तः प्रकाशते ॥ २७ ॥

kumbhitā recitā vāpi pūritā vā yadā bhavet |
tadante śāntanāmāsau śaktyā śāntaḥ prakāśate || 27 ||

If (the power of the vital breath) called 'Tranquil' is retained, whether it has been ejected (in the course of exhalation) or else when filled (in the course of inhalation), in the end of that (practice Sadāśiva) the Tranquil One, manifests by means of (that same) power. (27)

5) The Ascent of the Energy of the Vital Breath

आमूलात्किरणाभासां सूक्ष्मात् सूक्ष्मतरात्मिकाम् ।
चिन्तयेत्तां द्विषट्कान्ते शाम्यन्तीं भैरवोदयः ॥ २८ ॥

āmūlāt kiraṇābhāsāṃ sūkṣmāt sūkṣmatarātmikām |
cintayet tāṃ dviṣaṭkānte śāmyantīṃ bhairavodayaḥ || 28 ||

One should think that that (energy of the vital breath), shining with rays, (emerges) from the Root, (and becomes progressively) more subtle than the subtle (as it ascends), coming to rest within the End of the Twelve (where) Bhairava awakes. (28)

6) The Powerful Radiant Ascent of Kuṇḍalinī

उद्गच्छन्तीं तडिद्रूपां प्रतिचक्रं क्रमात्क्रमम् ।
ऊर्द्ध्वं मुष्टित्रयं यावत् तावदन्ते महोदयः ॥ २९ ॥

udgacchantīṃ taḍidrūpāṃ praticakraṃ kramāt kramam |
ūrddhvaṃ muṣṭitrayaṃ yāvat tāvad ante mahodayaḥ || 29 ||

(Contemplate Kuṇḍalinī, the power of the vital breath) in the form of lightning, ascending through each Wheel (one after the other) in due order up to the upper (space spanning the measure of) three clenched fists until, in the end, the Great Awakening! (29)

7) The Twelve Stations of Ascent

क्रमद्वादशकं सम्यग्द्वादशाक्षरभेदितम् ।
स्थूलसूक्ष्मपरस्थित्या मुक्त्वा मुक्त्वान्ततः शिवः ॥ ३० ॥

kramadvādaśakaṃ samyag dvādaśākṣarabheditam |
sthūlasūkṣmaparasthityā muktvā muktvāntataḥ śivaḥ || 30 ||

The sequence of twelve (centres within the body) is rightly linked to the twelve vowels. Abandoning one after another (their) gross, subtle and supreme states, in the end (the yogi attains) Śiva. (30)

8) The Ascent of the Breath through the Valve Between the Eyebrows

तयापूर्याशु मूर्धान्तं भङ्क्त्वा भ्रूक्षेपसेतुना ।
निर्विकल्पं मनः कृत्वा सर्वोर्ध्वे सर्वगोद्गमः ॥ ३१ ॥

tayāpūryāśu mūrdhāntaṃ bhaṅktvā bhrūkṣepasetunā |
nirvikalpaṃ manaḥ kṛtvā sarvordhve sarvagodgamaḥ || 31 ||

Having quickly filled (the body up to the Cavity of Brahmā) at the summit of the head with that (same energy of the vital breath) and blocked (the flow of the mind and breath) with the dam (formed by) arching the eyebrows, having (thus) freed the mind of thought, the omnipresent one emerges above all (things). (31)

9) The Five Voids of the Senses and the Void of the Heart

शिखिपक्षैश्चित्ररूपैर्मण्डलैः शून्यपञ्चकम् ।
ध्यायतोऽनुत्तरे शून्ये प्रवेशो हृदये भवेत् ॥ ३२ ॥

śikhipakṣaiś citrarūpair maṇḍalaiḥ śūnyapañcakam |
dhyāyato'nuttare śūnye praveśo hṛdaye bhavet || 32 ||

Meditating on the five voids (of the sensations) by means of the spheres (of the senses), variegated in form (like) the feathers of a peacock, (the yogi) enters into the most excellent (*anuttara*) Void within the Heart (of consciousness). (32)

10) The Dissolving away of Attentive Thought

ईदृशेन क्रमेणैव यत्र कुत्रापि चिन्तना ।
शून्ये कुड्ये परे पात्रे स्वयं लीना वरप्रदा ॥ ३३ ॥

īdṛśena krameṇaiva yatra kutrāpi cintanā |
śūnye kuḍye pare pātre svayaṃ līnā varapradā || 33 ||

Wherever (one's attentive) thought (*cintanā*) (settles) by this same process, be it in an empty space, on a wall, (or) on a worthy disciple, it spontaneously dissolves away and (so) bestows the boon (of pure consciousness). (33)

11) Placing the Mind in the Space within the Skull

कपालान्तर्मनो न्यस्य तिष्ठन्मीलितलोचनः ।
क्रमेण मनसो दार्ढ्यात् लक्षयेल्लक्ष्यमुत्तमम् ॥ ३४ ॥

kapālāntar mano nyasya tiṣṭhan mīlitalocanaḥ |
krameṇa manaso dārḍhyāt lakṣayel lakṣyam uttamam || 34 ||

Having placed the mind within (the space of the) skull, abiding (motionless) with the eyes closed, by the progressively (increasing) stability of the mind, one perceives the supreme goal. (34)

12) The Middle Channel, the Inner Void and the Goddess

मध्यनाडी मध्यसंस्था बिससूत्राभरूपया ।
ध्यातान्तर्व्योमया देव्या तया देवः प्रकाशते ॥ ३५ ॥

madhyanāḍī madhyasaṃsthā bisasūtrābharūpayā |
dhyātāntarvyomayā devyā tayā devaḥ prakāśate || 35 ||

The Middle Channel is situated in the middle (between the two breaths) in (an extremely subtle) form like a lotus fibre. Having meditated on that as the Goddess Who is the inner Void, the God is illumined by Her. (35)

13) Piercing between the Eyes, the Vision of Light and the Void in the centre

कररुद्धदृगस्त्रेण भ्रूभदाद्द्वाररोधनात् ।
दृष्टे बिन्दौ क्रमाल्लीने तन्मध्ये परमा स्थितिः ॥ ३६ ॥

kararuddhadṛgastreṇa bhrūbhedād dvārarodhanāt |
dṛṣṭe bindau kramāl līne tanmadhye paramā sthitiḥ || 36 ||

By closing the doors (of the senses) with the weapon, that is, blocking (their) perception with the hands, and by piercing (the centre between) the eyebrows, when the Point (*bindu*) (of light) is perceived and gradually dissolves away, (the yogi attains) the supreme state in the centre (of the Void of consciousness). (36)

14) Pressing the Eyes and the dissolving away of the flame between the Eyebrows

धामान्तः क्षोभसंभूतसूक्ष्माग्नितिलकाकृतिम् ।
बिन्दुं शिखान्ते हृदये लयान्ते ध्यायतो लयः ॥ ३७ ॥

dhāmāntaḥkṣobhasaṃbhūtasūkṣmāgnitilakākṛtim |
binduṃ śikhānte hṛdaye layānte dhyāyato layaḥ || 37 ||

A Point (of light) in the form of a subtle line (*tilaka*) of fire (between the eyebrows) arises by the inner agitation of (the eyeballs,) the abode (*dhāman*) (of sight), when it has dissolved away whilst meditating (on it) (within the upper End of the Twelve-finger Space) in the extremity of the topknot and within the heart, (the mind) dissolves away. (37)

15) The Brahman of Sound in the Cavity of the Ear

अनाहते पात्रकर्णेऽभग्नशब्दे सरिद्द्रुते ।
शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति ॥ ३८ ॥

anāhate pātrakarṇe 'bhagnaśabde sariddrute |
śabdabrahmaṇi niṣṇātaḥ paraṃ brahmādhigacchati || 38 ||

He attains the Supreme Brahman who is deeply merged into the Brahman that is sound (*śabdabrahman*), which is the Unstruck Sound (perceived) within the cavity of the ear (that is like) the uninterrupted sound of a fast flowing river. (38)

16) The Extremity of the Resonance of Praṇava

प्रणवादिसमुच्चारात्प्लुतान्ते शून्यभावनात् ।
शून्यया परया शक्त्या शून्यतामेति भैरवि ॥ ३९ ॥

praṇavādisamuccārāt plutānte śūnyabhāvanāt |
śūnyayā parayā śaktyā śūnyatām eti bhairavi || 39 ||

O Bhairavī, by uttering a *praṇava* or the like and by meditating on the void at the end of (its) prolated sound, (the yogi) attains Emptiness by means of the Void which is (Śiva's) supreme power. (39)

17) The start and end of any letter become the Void by the Power of the Void

यस्य कस्यापि वर्णस्य पूर्वान्तावनुभावयेत् ।
शून्यया शून्यभूतोऽसौ शून्याकारः पुमान्भवेत् ॥ ४० ॥

yasya kasyāpi varṇasya pūrvāntāv anubhāvayet |
śūnyayā śūnyabhūto'sau śūnyākāraḥ pumān bhavet || 40 ||

One should experience (mindfully) the beginning and end of (the utterance of) any phoneme (*varṇa*). Having become the Void by (the power of) the Void (there), the person (free of identification with embodied subjectivity becomes) the form of the Void. (40)

18) The prolonged sound of a *vīṇā*, at the end, the Supreme Void

तन्त्र्यादिवाद्यशब्देषु दीर्घेषु क्रमसंस्थितेः ।
अनन्यचेताः प्रत्यन्ते परव्योमवपुर्भवेत् ॥ ४१ ॥

tantryādivādyaśabdeṣu dīrgheṣu kramasaṃsthiteḥ |
ananyacetāḥ pratyante paravyomavapur bhavet || 41 ||

He who (listens) with undivided attention to the prolonged sounds of stringed and other instruments of (the notes played) in their due order (to make music), when (their resonance) comes to an end, (his) body is the Supreme Void. (41)

19) The Void at the end of the resonance of a seed syllable Mantra

पिण्डमन्त्रस्य सर्वस्य स्थूलवर्णक्रमेण तु ।
अर्धेन्दुबिन्दुनादान्तशून्योच्चाराद्भवेच्छिवः ॥ ४२ ॥

piṇḍamantrasya sarvasya sthūlavarṇakrameṇa tu |
ardhendubindunādāntaśūnyoccārād bhavec chivaḥ || 42 ||

By uttering the Void (at the end) of the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), the Point (*bindu*), Sound (*nāda*), and the End (of Sound) of an entire syllabic (*piṇḍa*) mantra in accord with the sequence of (its) gross letters, (the yogi) becomes Śiva indeed. (42)

20) The Void in all directions within the body

निजदेहे सर्वदिक्कं युगपद्भावयेद्वियत् ।
निर्विकल्पमनास्तस्य वियत्सर्वं प्रवर्तते ॥ ४३ ॥

nijadehe sarvadikkaṃ yugapad bhāvayed viyat |
nirvikalpamanās tasya viyat sarvaṃ pravartate || 43 ||

(The yogi) should meditate on the Void which is in all directions (at once) simultaneously within his own body, (his) mind free of thought. (Thus), everything becomes Void for him. (43)

21) The Void in the Root and the Void above

पृष्ठशून्यं मूलशून्यं युगपद्भावयेच्च यः ।
शरीरनिरपेक्षिण्या शक्त्या शून्यमना भवेत् ॥ ४४ ॥

pṛṣṭhaśūnyaṃ mūlaśūnyaṃ yugapad bhāvayec ca yaḥ |
śarīranirapekṣiṇyā śaktyā śūnyamanā bhavet || 44 ||

He who simultaneously contemplates the Void above and the Void in the root (foundation below) becomes devoid of mind by the power (of consciousness) that is independent of the body. (44)

22) The Void in the Root, the Void above and the Void in the heart

पृष्ठशून्यं मूलशून्यं हृच्छून्यं भावयेत्स्थिरम् ।
युगपन्निर्विकल्पत्वान्निर्विकल्पोदयस्ततः ॥ ४५ ॥

pṛṣṭhaśūnyaṃ mūlaśūnyaṃ hṛcchūnyaṃ bhāvayet sthiram |
yugapan nirvikalpatvān nirvikalpodayas tataḥ || 45 ||

One should meditate firmly, simultaneously on the Void above, the Void in the root (foundation below) and the Void in the heart, thus, being free of thought, (the liberated state) free of thought dawns. (45)

23) Emptiness in the body, the mind free of thought

तनूदेशे शून्यतैव क्षणमात्रं विभावयेत् ।
निर्विकल्पं निर्विकल्पो निर्विकल्पस्वरूपभाक् ॥ ४६ ॥

tanūdeśe śūnyataiva kṣaṇamātraṃ vibhāvayet |
nirvikalpaṃ nirvikalpo nirvikalpasvarūpabhāk || 46 ||

(If the state) free of thought (*nirvikalpa*), which is nothing but the emptiness within the location of the body, contemplates (the mind made) free of thought (*nirvikalpam*), for just a moment, (the one who is thus free of thought) possesses the nature of (that reality) free of thought. (46) (45)

24) All the substance of the body is pervaded by the Void

सर्वं देहगतं द्रव्यं वियद्व्याप्तं मृगेक्षणे ।
विभावयेत्ततस्तस्य भावना सा स्थिरा भवेत् ॥ ४७ ॥

sarvaṃ dehagataṃ dravyaṃ viyadvyāptaṃ mṛgekṣaṇe |
vibhāvayet tatas tasya bhāvanā sā sthirā bhavet || 47 ||

O gazelle-eyed one! One should reflect (*vibhāvayet*) that all the (organic) substance in the body is pervaded by the Void; then one's contemplation (*bhāvanā*) (of the Void) should be firm. (47) (46)

25) The skin is the wall of the body. Inside it is empty

देहान्तरे त्वग्विभागं भित्तिभूतं विचिन्तयेत् ।
न किञ्चिदन्तरे तस्य ध्यायन्नध्येयभाग्भवेत् ॥ ४८ ॥

dehāntare tvagvibhāgaṃ bhittibhūtaṃ vicintayet |
na kiñcid antare tasya dhyāyan adhyeyabhāg bhavet || 48 ||

One should think that the part which is the skin within the body is (an encompassing) wall, within which there is nothing at all. Meditating (in this way), (the yogi) participates in what cannot be an object of meditation. (48) (47)

26) Merging the senses in the Void encapsulated in the Lotus of the Heart

हृद्याकाशे निलीनाक्षः पद्मसंपुटमध्यगः ।
अनन्यचेताः सुभगे परं सौभाग्यमाप्नुयात् ॥ ४९ ॥

hṛdyākāśe nilīnākṣaḥ padmasaṃpuṭamadhyagaḥ |
ananyacetāḥ subhage paraṃ saubhāgyam āpnuyāt || 49 ||

O Blessed One, (the yogi) whose senses have merged into the space within the Heart and (abides there) with an undistracted mind in the centre between the two halves of the lotus, attains supreme good fortune. (49)

27) Dissolving the mind into the End of the Twelve

सर्वतः स्वशरीरस्य द्वादशान्ते मनो लयात् ।
दृढबुद्धेर्दृढीभूतं तत्त्वलक्ष्यं प्रवर्तते ॥ ५० ॥

sarvataḥ svaśarīrasya dvādaśānte manolayāt |
dṛḍhabuddher dṛḍhībhūtaṃ tattvalakṣyaṃ pravartate || 50 ||

By dissolving away the mind in all respects (completely) into the End of the Twelve of his own body, the goal which is (the one ultimate) reality comes forth well established for (the yogi whose) intellect is firm (and unwavering). (50) (49)

28) Cast the mind in any way, always and everywhere into the End of the Twelve

यथा तथा यत्र तत्र द्वादशान्ते मनः क्षिपेत् ।
प्रतिक्षणं क्षीणवृत्तेर्वैलक्षण्यं दिनैर्भवेत् ॥ ५१ ॥

yathā tathā yatra tatra dvādaśānte manaḥ kṣipet |
pratikṣaṇaṃ kṣīṇavṛtter vailakṣaṇyaṃ dinair bhavet || 51 ||

One should cast one's mind into the End of the Twelve in any way and wherever, every moment, and so for one (whose mental) activity (has) ceased (by this practice), an unparalleled (state) arises within (a few) days. (51) (50)

28) Burning the Body with the Fire of Time

कालाग्निना कालपदादुत्थितेन स्वकं पुरम् ।
प्लुष्टं विचिन्तयेदन्ते शान्ताभासस्तदा भवेत् ॥ ५२ ॥

kālāgninā kālapadād utthitena svakaṃ puram |
pluṣṭaṃ vicintayed ante śāntābhāsas tadā bhavet || 52 ||

(The yogi) should think that his own body has been burnt (to ashes) by the Fire of Time that has arisen from the (toe of the right foot, which is) the abode of (the Fire of) Time. Then, in the end, the Tranquil One manifests. (52) (51)

29) Once the entire universe has burnt away

एवमेव जगत्सर्वं दग्धं ध्यात्वा विकल्पतः ।
अनन्यचेतसः पुंसः पुंभावः परमो भवेत् ॥ ५३ ॥

evam eva jagat sarvaṃ dagdhaṃ dhyātvā vikalpataḥ |
ananyacetasaḥ puṃsaḥ puṃbhāvaḥ paramo bhavet || 53 ||

Having meditated in this same way by imagining that the entire universe has been burnt away, a person whose mind is undistracted possesses the soul's supreme state. (53) (52)

30) Progressively more subtle merger until Parā is revealed

स्वदेहे जगतो वापि सूक्ष्मसूक्ष्मतराणि च ।
तत्त्वानि यानि निलयं ध्यात्वान्ते व्यज्यते परा ॥ ५४ ॥

svadehe jagato vā 'pi sūkṣmasūkṣmatarāṇi ca |
tattvāni yāni nilayaṃ dhyātvānte vyajyate parā || 54 ||

Having meditated on the merger of the subtle and (then progressively) most subtle principles (back into one another) that are within one's own body or also of the universe, in the end (the Goddess) Parā is revealed. (54)

31) Mastery over Dreams

पीनां च दुर्बलां शक्तिं ध्यात्वा द्वादशगोचरे ।
प्रविश्य हृदये ध्यायन्मुक्तः स्वातन्त्र्यमाप्नुयात् ॥ ५५ ॥

pīnāṃ ca durbalāṃ śaktiṃ dhyātvā dvādaśagocare |
praviśya hṛdaye dhyāyan svapnasvātantryam āpnuyāt || 55 ||

Having meditated on the energy (of the breath) fat (with its natural sound) as well as weak (and lengthy) in the region of the twelve (finger space then), once entered into the heart (when falling asleep) whilst engaged (in this) meditation, attains mastery (over his dreams). (55) (54)

The merger of the Six Paths into consciousness (56–57)

32) Meditation on the Six Paths as gross, subtle and supreme

भुवनाध्वादिरूपेण चिन्तयेत्क्रमशोऽखिलम् ।
स्थूलसूक्ष्मपरस्थित्या यावदन्ते मनोलयः ॥ ५६ ॥

bhuvanādhvādirūpeṇa cintayet kramaśo 'khilam |
sthūlasūkṣmaparasthityā yāvad ante manolayaḥ || 56 ||

One should think successively of everything in the form of the path (*adhvan*) of the worlds (*bhuvana*) and the rest (of the paths), in (their) gross, subtle and supreme condition until, in the end, the mind dissolves away. (56) (55)

33) Meditating that Śiva is all things by means of the Paths

अस्य सर्वस्य विश्वस्य पर्यन्तेषु समन्ततः ।
अध्वप्रक्रियया तत्त्वं शैवं ध्यात्वा महोदयः ॥ ५७ ॥

asya sarvasya viśvasya paryanteṣu samantataḥ |
adhvaprakriyayā tattvaṃ śaivaṃ dhyātvā mahodayaḥ || 57 ||

Having meditated on the true nature (*tattva*) of all this universe as Śiva (who is within all things) right up to the very last ones, all around (in every way) (*samantataḥ*) by (applying) the procedure of the (six) Paths, (there comes about) the Great Awakening (*mahodaya*)! (57) (56)

34) The universe is Void, the vessel of merger of the mind

विश्वमेतन्महादेवि शून्यभूतं विचिन्तयेत् ।
तत्रैव च मनो लीनं ततस्तल्लयभाजनम् ॥ ५८ ॥

viśvam etan mahādevi śūnyabhūtaṃ vicintayet |
tatraiva ca mano līnaṃ tatas tal layabhājanam || 58 ||

O Great Goddess! One should think that this universe is Void and that the mind is dissolved away just there itself. Thus, that is the vessel of merger. (58) (57)

Physical emptiness develops into the emptiness of pure consciousness (59–60)

35) Dissolving away by gazing at the empty space of a jar without sides

घटादिभाजने दृष्टिं भित्तीस्त्यक्ता विनिक्षिपेत् ।
तल्लयं तत्क्षणाद्गत्वा तल्लयात्तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ ५९ ॥

ghaṭādibhājane dṛṣṭiṃ bhittīs tyaktvā vinikṣipet |
tallayaṃ tatkṣaṇād gatvā tallayāt tanmayo bhavet || 59 ||

One should cast (one's) gaze into (the empty space of) a jar, for example, (or any other) vessel, having set aside (its) enclosing surfaces. Having dissolved away into it in that very moment into it, one becomes of that nature by virtue of that merger. (59) (58)

36) Gazing at empty spaces dissolves away the mind

निर्वृक्षगिरिभित्त्यादिदेशे दृष्टिं विनिक्षिपेत् ।
विलीने मानसे भावे वृत्तिक्षीणः प्रजायते ॥ ६० ॥

nirvṛkṣagiribhittyādideśe dṛṣṭiṃ vinikṣipet |
vilīne mānase bhāve vṛttikṣīṇaḥ prajāyate || 60 ||

One should cast (one's) gaze on (an open stretch of) land devoid of trees, on mountains, walls and the like. When the mind's existence is (thus) in a state of merger (and has dissolved away), one becomes free of the fluctuations (of thought). (60) (59)

37) The Void in the centre between two objects

उभयोर्भावयोर्ज्ञाने ध्यात्वा मध्यं समाश्रयेत् ।
युगपच्च द्वयं त्यक्त्वा मध्ये तत्त्वं प्रकाशते ॥ ६१ ॥

ubhayor bhāvayor jñāne dhyātvā madhyaṃ samāśrayet |
yugapac ca dvayaṃ tyaktvā madhye tattvaṃ prakāśate || 61 ||

When perceiving two entities, having meditated (on the emptiness) that is the centre between both of them, (the yogi) should rest (there). And (then), having abandoned the two simultaneously (at once), Reality shines (there) in the centre. (61) (60)

38) The expansion of meditation in the centre by abandoning an object without moving to another

भावे न्यक्ते निरुद्धा चित् नैव भावान्तरं व्रजेत् ।
तदा तन्मध्यभावेन विकसत्यति भावना ॥ ६२ ॥

bhāve tyakte niruddhā cit naiva bhāvāntaraṃ vrajet |
tadā tanmadhyabhāvena vikasaty atibhāvanā || 62 ||

When one thing has been concealed (*tyakte*) (or abandoned), and consciousness has been (firmly) checked, it should not move on to something (*bhāva*) else. Then meditation (*bhāvanā*) blossoms forth intensely (*ati*) by virtue of (the emptiness of) the state (free of thought) in the centre (between) them (*tanmadhyabhāvena*). (62) (61)

39) The body and the universe are made of consciousness

सर्वं देहं चिन्मयं हि जगद्वा परिभावयेत् ।
युगपन्निर्विकल्पेन मनसा परमोदयः ॥ ६३ ॥

sarvaṃ dehaṃ cinmayaṃ hi jagad vā paribhāvayet |
yugapan nirvikalpena manasā paramodayaḥ || 63 ||

One should reflect all at once (simultaneously) with the mind free of thought that all the body or the universe is just (*hi*) made of consciousness; (thus the yogi attains) the supreme Awakening! (63) (62)

The Union of the Two Breaths

40) Meditating on the Emptiness where the breaths unite

वायुद्वयस्य संघट्टादन्तर्वा बहिरन्ततः ।
योगी समत्वविज्ञानसमुद्गमनभाजनम् ॥ ६४ ॥

vāyudvayasya saṃghaṭṭāt antar vā bahir antataḥ |
yogī samatvavijñānasamudgamanabhājanam || 64 ||

By the dynamic union (*saṃghaṭṭa*) of the two breaths, either within (the heart) or outside (in the End of the Twelve, meditating on the emptiness there), in the end, the yogi becomes the vessel of the emergence of the knowledge (that perceives) the equality (of all things). (64) (64)

41) The body and universe are full of bliss

सर्वं जगत्स्वदेहं वा स्वानन्दभरितं स्मरेत् ।
युगपन्स्वामृतेनैव परानन्दमयो भवेत् ॥ ६५ ॥

sarvaṃ jagat svadehaṃ vā svānandabharitaṃ smaret |
yugapan svāmṛtenaiva parānandamayo bhavet || 65 ||

(The yogi) should recollect that the whole universe or his own body is filled all at once (simultaneously) with his own (innate) bliss. (Then), by the nectar of his own (innate nature) alone, he becomes supreme bliss. (65) (63)

42) The arising of great bliss by means of a trick

कुहनेन प्रयोगेन सद्य एव मृगेक्षणे ।
समुदेति महानन्दो येन तत्त्वं प्रकाशते ॥ ६६ ॥

kuhanena prayogena sadya eva mṛgekṣaṇe |
samudeti mahānando yena tattvaṃ prakāśate || 66 ||

O gazelle-eyed (goddess), by applying the trick (of tickling under the armpits), great bliss arises all of a sudden (*sadyas*) due to which (the supreme) reality manifests. (66) (65)

43) The blissful sensation like of an ant crawling on the skin by the ascent of the power of the vital breath

सर्वस्रोतोनिबन्धेन प्राणशक्त्योर्ध्वया शनैः ।
पिपीलस्पर्शवेलायां प्रथते परमं सुखम् ॥ ६७ ॥

sarvasrotonibandhena prāṇaśaktyordhvayā śanaiḥ |
pipīlasparśavelāyāṃ prathate paramaṃ sukham || 67 ||

When (the yogi) feels a tactile sensation (like the crawling) of an ant (on the skin), due to the slow upward elevation of the energy of the vital breath brought about by checking all the currents (of the senses), he experiences supreme bliss. (67) (66)

Meditions when making Love (68–70)

44) Placing the mind between Fire and Poison

वह्नेर्विषस्य मध्ये तु चित्तं सुखमयं क्षिपेत् ।
केवलं वायुपूर्णं वा स्मरानन्देन युज्यते ॥ ६८ ॥

vahner viṣasya madhye tu cittaṃ sukhamayaṃ kṣipet |
kevalaṃ vāyupūrṇaṃ vā smarānandena yujyate || 68 ||

(When making love), one should place one's mind, made of bliss, in the middle (between the) 'Fire' (of the arousal of passion at the beginning) and the 'Poison' (of the pervasive consciousness of its appeasement at the end), or else filled only with the vital breath, (the mind) should be united with the bliss of passion (*smarānanda*) (which is the bliss of consciousness generated by the union of Śiva and Śakti). (68)

45) The bliss of climax and penetration into Śakti

शक्तिसंगमसंक्षुब्धशक्त्यावेशावसानिकम् ।
यत्सुखं ब्रह्मतत्त्वस्य तत्सुखं स्वाक्यमुच्यते ॥ ६९ ॥

śaktisaṃgamasaṃkṣubdhaśaktyāveśāvasānikam |
yat sukhaṃ brahmatattvasya tat sukhaṃ svākyam ucyate || 69 ||

The bliss (*sukha*) that culminates (during orgasm) with penetration into power (*śakti*) well aroused by (sexual) union with a *śakti* is that of the reality of the Brahman which is said to be one's own (inherent) bliss. (69) (68)

46) Experience of bliss even in the absence of Śakti

लेहनामन्थनाकोटैः स्त्रीसुखस्य भरात्स्मृतेः ।
शक्त्यभावेऽपि देवेशि भवेदानन्दसंप्लवः ॥ ७० ॥

lehanāmanthanākoṭaiḥ strīsukhasya bharāt smṛteḥ |
śaktyabhāve'pi deveśi bhaved ānandasaṃplavaḥ || 70 ||

O goddess of the gods, even in the absence of a Śakti, there is a flood of bliss by filling the memory with the joy (of sex, with a) woman, (had) by licking, churning, squeezing and the like. (70) (69)

47) Meditation on joy and bliss

आनन्दे महति प्राप्ते दृष्टे वा बान्धवे चिरात् ।
आनन्दमुद्गतं ध्यात्वा तल्लयस्तन्मना भवेत् ॥ ७१ ॥

ānande mahati prāpte dṛṣṭe vā bāndhave cirāt
ānandam udgataṃ dhyātvā tallayas tanmayo bhavet || 71 ||

When there is occasion for great bliss (such as when making love), or when seeing a (dear) relative (or friend) after a long time, having meditated on the bliss that arises (just then); (he, whose mind) is of that nature, dissolves into it. (71) (70)

48) The pleasure of good food and drink

जग्धिपानकृतोल्लासरसानन्दविजृम्भणात् ।
भावयेद्भरितावस्थां महानन्दस्ततो भवेत् ॥ ७२ ॥

jagdhipānakṛtollāsarasānandavijṛmbhaṇāt |
bhāvayed bharitāvasthāṃ mahānandas tato bhavet || 72 ||

(The yogi) should contemplate (*bhāvayed*) the state (of spiritual) plenitude (he experiences brought about) by the unfolding of the joy, which is the savor (of the aesthetic delight) of the outpouring (of consciousness) brought about by eating and drinking. From that, there is great bliss. (72) (71)

49) Identification with the savor of music and art

गीतादिविषयास्वादासमसौख्यैकतात्मनः ।
योगिनस्तन्मयत्वेन मनोरूढेस्तदात्मता ॥ ७३ ॥

gītādiviṣayāsvādāsamasaukhyaikatātmanaḥ |
yoginas tanmayatvena manorūḍhes tadātmatā || 73 ||

The yogi who (experiences) the oneness of the unparalleled joy of savoring singing and other such (beautiful) objects (of sense, his) mind fixed (and well concentrated on that), becomes of that same (blissful) nature (as the Brahman) by identifying with it (*tanmayatvena*). (73) (72)

50) Concentrating on whatever satisfies the mind

यत्र यत्र मनस्तुष्टिर्मनस्तत्रैव धारयेत् ।
तत्र तत्र परानन्दस्वरूपं संप्रवर्तते ॥ ७४ ॥

yatra yatra manas tuṣṭir manas tatraiva dhārayet |
tatra tatra parānandasvarūpaṃ saṃpravartate || 74 ||

One should sustain (*dhārayet*) (one's) attention wherever the mind is satisfied. It is there that the inherent nature of Supreme Bliss arises. (74) (73)

51) The Goddess Parā manifests between Waking and Sleep

अनागतायां निद्रायां प्रणष्टे बाह्यगोचरे ।
सावस्था मनसा गम्या परा देवी प्रकाशते ॥ ७५ ॥

anāgatāyāṃ nidrāyāṃ praṇaṣṭe bāhyagocare |
sāvasthā manasā gamyā parā devī prakāśate || 75 ||

The state that manifests, which should be grasped by the (attentive) mind when, (as one falls asleep), the external field (of awareness) has disappeared (but) sleep has not yet come, is the Goddess Parā. (75) (74)

52) Gazing into empty space illumined by the sun or a lamp

तेजसा सूर्यदीपादेराकाशे शवलीकृते ।
दृष्टिर्निवेश्या तत्रैव स्वात्मरूपं प्रकाशते ॥ ७६ ॥

tejasā sūryadīpāder ākāśe śavalīkṛte |
dṛṣṭir niveśyā tatraiva svātmarūpaṃ prakāśate || 76 ||

One should direct one's gaze into the sky (or empty space) variegated by the light of the sun, lamp or the like. There itself one's own essential nature manifests. (76)

53) The Five Seals of the Krama Teachings

करङ्किण्या क्रोधनया भैरव्या लेलिहानया ।
खेचर्या दृष्टिकाले च परावाप्तिः प्रकाशते ॥ ७७ ॥

karaṅkiṇyā krodhanayā bhairavyā lelihānayā |
khecaryā dṛṣṭikāle ca parā vyāptiḥ prakāśate || 77 ||

By (practicing) Karaṅkiṇī, Krodhanā, Bhairavī, Lelihānā and Khecarī (mūdras) when perception takes place, the pervasion of (the Goddess) Parā shines. (77)

Posturing the Body (78–79)

54) Sitting with one buttock on a soft seat

मृद्वासने स्फिजैकेन हस्तपादौ निराश्रयम् ।
निधाय तत्प्रसङ्गेन परा पूर्णा मतिर्भवेत् ॥ ७८ ॥

mṛdvāsane sphijaikena hastapādau nirāśraye |
vidhāya tatprasaṅgena parā pūrṇā matir bhavet || 78 ||

(The yogi should sit) on a soft seat, on one buttock, keeping (his) hands and feet without support. (His) intellect (*mati*) becomes supreme and complete in adherence with that. (78) (77)

55) Meditating on the armpits

उपविश्यासने सम्यक् बाहू कृत्वार्धकुञ्चितौ ।
कक्षव्योम्नि मनः कुर्वन् शममायाति तल्लयात् ॥ ७९ ॥

upaviśyāsane samyag bāhū kṛtvārdhakuñcitau |
kakṣavyomni manaḥ kurvan śamam āyāti tallayāt || 79 ||

Having sat on a seat and half bent the arms properly (as required), fixing the mind on the space under the armpits, by merging into that, peace comes. (79)

56) Staring at an object, the mind, free of thought

स्थूलरूपस्य भावस्य स्तब्धां दृष्टिं निपात्य च ।
अचिरेण निराधारं मनः कृत्वा शिवं व्रजेत् ॥ ८० ॥

sthūlarūpasya bhāvasya stabdhāṃ dṛṣṭiṃ nipātya ca |
acireṇa nirādhāraṃ manaḥ kṛtvā śivaṃ vrajet || 80 ||

Having cast (his) gaze fixed, (without blinking), on a gross object (directing his attention inward) and making the mind free of the support (of thought), (the yogi) soon reaches Śiva. (80)

57) Uttering the letter H mentally

मध्यजिह्वे स्फारितास्ये मध्ये निक्षिप्य चेतनाम् ।
होच्चारं मनसा कुर्वंस्ततः शान्ते प्रलीयते ॥ ८१ ॥

madhyajihve sphāritāsye madhye nikṣipya cetanām |
hoccāraṃ manasā kurvaṃs tataḥ śānte pralīyate || 81 ||

The tongue (turned up) into the centre (of the nasal cavity), having cast (one's) attention (there) in the middle of the mouth, gapping wide open whilst uttering (the letter) H mentally, (the breath) then dissolves away into the Tranquil One. (81)

Posturing the Body (82–83)

58) Meditating that the body is without support

आसने शयने स्थित्वा निराधारं विभावयन्
स्वदेहं मनसि क्षीणे क्षणात् क्षीणाशयो भवेत् ॥ ८२ ॥

āsane śayane sthitvā nirādhāraṃ vibhāvayan |
svadehaṃ manasi kṣīṇe kṣaṇāt kṣīṇāśayo bhavet || 82 ||

(Either sitting) on a seat or (lying) on a bed, meditating (*vibhāvayan*) on one's own body as being without support, when the mind ceases, within a moment (the yogi) is free of (all his binding) dispositions (*āśaya*). (82)

59) Meditation on the rocking of the body

चलासने स्थितस्याथ शनैर्वा देहचालनात् ।
प्रशान्ते मानसे भावे देवि दिव्यौघमाप्नुयात् ॥ ८३ ॥

calāsane sthitasyātha śanair vā dehacālanāt |
praśānte mānase bhāve devi divyaugham āpnuyāt || 83 ||

O Goddess, whether seated on a moving seat (of a vehicle) or by rocking (one's own) body slowly when the mind is in a tranquil state, one attains the Divine Current (*divyaugha*) (of the assembly of divine worlds and supreme yogis). (83)

Meditating on the Sky outside and within (84–88)

60) Gazing at a cloudless sky

आकाशं विमलं पश्यन् कृत्वा दृष्टिं निरन्तराम् ।
स्तब्धात्मा तत्क्षणाद्देवि भैरवं वपुराप्नुयात् ॥ ८४ ॥

ākāśaṃ vimalaṃ paśyan kṛtvā dṛṣṭiṃ nirantarām |
stabdhātmā tatkṣaṇād devi bhairavaṃ vapur āpnuyāt || 84 ||

Beholding a clear (cloudless) sky, having made (his) gaze (constant) without a break, he (whose body, senses and mind are perfectly) immobile attains, O Goddess, that very instant, Bhairava's nature. (84)

61) Imagine the whole sky is in the head as Bhairava's form

लीनं मूर्ध्नि वियत्सर्वं भैरवत्वेन भावयेत् ।
तत्सर्वं भैरवाकारतेजस्तत्त्वं समाविशेत् ॥ ८५ ॥

līnaṃ mūrdhni viyat sarvaṃ bhairavatvena bhāvayet |
tat sarvaṃ bhairavākāratejastattvaṃ samāviśet || 85 ||

(The yogi) should imagine (*bhāvayet*) that the entire (expanse of the) sky is merged within (his) head as Bhairava's state. (Then he and) all that (exists) penetrates (and is absorbed) into the reality (which is) the radiant energy (*tejas*) of Bhairava's form. (85) (84)

62) Bhairava as the three states of consciousness

किंचिज्ज्ञातं द्वैतदायि बाह्यालोकस्तमः पुनः ।
विश्वादि भैरवं रूपं ज्ञात्वानन्तप्रकाशभृत् ॥ ८६ ॥

kiṃcij jñātaṃ dvaitadāyi bāhyālokas tamaḥ punaḥ |
viśvādi bhairavaṃ rūpaṃ jñātvānantaprakāśabhṛt || 86 ||

(The yogi) possesses infinite Light once known Bhairava's nature as the waking and other (states), namely, (waking, in which only) something is known that generates duality, (dreaming, in which) the light (shines that illumines the mental traces of) the outer (world) and, again, (deep sleep, which is) darkness. (86) (85)

63) Attaining Bhairava's nature by gazing at the dark sky at night

एवमेव दुर्निशायां कृष्णपक्षागमे चिरम् ।
तैमिरं भावयन् रूपं भैरवं रूपमेष्यति ॥ ८७ ॥

evam eva durniśāyāṃ kṛṣṇapakṣāgame ciram |
taimiraṃ bhāvayan rūpaṃ bhairavaṃ rūpam eṣyati || 87 ||

In the very same way, (the yogi) engaged in contemplating for a long time the (awesome) dark form (of the sky) on a dark (stormy) night during the dark lunar fortnight, (especially when there is no moon), attains Bhairava's nature. (87) (86)

64) Darkness in front with the eyes closed

एवमेव निमील्यादौ नेत्रे कृष्णाभमग्रतः ।
प्रसार्य भैरवं रूपं भावयंस्तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ ८८ ॥

evam eva nimīlyādau netre kṛṣṇābham agrataḥ |
prasārya bhairavaṃ rūpaṃ bhāvayaṃs tanmayo bhavet || 88 ||

In the very same way, initially closing the eyes (and meditating on) the darkness in front (and then opening them), extending out, contemplating (*bhāvayan*) (that dark) form of Bhairava, one becomes of that same nature. (88) (87)

65) Entry into the Void and the revelation of the Self by a blow to the body

यस्य कस्येन्द्रियस्यापि व्याघाताच्च निरोधतः
प्रविष्टस्याद्वये शून्ये तत्रैवात्मा प्रकाशते ॥ ८९ ॥

yasya kasyendriyasyāpi vyāghātāc ca nirodhataḥ
praviṣṭasyādvaye śūnye tatraivātmā prakāśate || 89 ||

(By blocking the function) of any one of the senses by a blow (from an external object) and by blocking (it voluntarily by striking oneself), the Self (*ātman*) (of the yogi) who has (thereby) entered the non-dual Void manifests there. (89) (88)

66) Meditation on the letter A

अबिन्दुमविसर्गं च अकारं जपतो महान् ।
उदेति देवि सहसा ज्ञानौघः परमेश्वरः ॥ ९० ॥

abindum avisargaṃ ca akāraṃ japato mahān |
udeti devi sahasā jñānaughaḥ parameśvaraḥ || 90 ||

O Goddess, by repeating the great letter 'A' without *bindu* (ṃ) and *visarga* (ḥ), the Supreme Lord, who is a torrent of knowledge, arises (spontaneously all) at once. (90)

67) Meditation on the end of *visarga* with the mind free of support

वर्णस्य सविसर्गस्य विसर्गान्तं चितिं कुरु ।
निराधारेण चित्तेन स्पृशेद्ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥ ९१ ॥

varṇasya savisargasya visargāntaṃ citiṃ kuru |
nirādhāreṇa cittena spṛśed brahma sanātanam || 91 ||

Fix (the power of your) awareness (*citi*), with the mind (*citta*) free of (objective) support, within (and on the end of) *visarga* (Ḥ) of a phoneme with *visarga* (Ḥ) and make contact with the eternal Brahman. (91) (90)

68) Meditation on the Self as unconfined space

व्योमाकारं स्वामात्मानं ध्यायेद्दिग्भिरनावृतम् ।
निराश्रया चितिः शक्तिः स्वरूपं दर्शयेत्तदा ॥ ९२ ॥

vyomākāraṃ svām ātmānaṃ dhyāyed digbhir anāvṛtam |
nirāśrayā citiḥ śaktiḥ svarūpaṃ darśayet tadā || 92 ||

One should meditate on one's own self in the form of the sky, unconfined by the directions, then (the Goddess who is) the power of consciousness, free of (all) support, shows (her) own nature. (92) (91)

69) Concentration on pain

किञ्चिदङ्गं विभिद्यादौ तीक्ष्णसूच्यादिना ततः ।
तत्रैव चेतनां युक्त्वा भैरवे निर्मला गतिः ॥ ९३ ॥

kiñcid aṅgaṃ vibhidyādau tīkṣṇasūcyādinā tataḥ |
tatraiva cetanāṃ yuktvā bhairave nirmalā gatiḥ || 93 ||

Having first pierced some limb (of the body) with a sharp needle or the like and then focused attention just there, (on the painful sensation), (one attains) the pure state within Bhairava. (93) (92)

70) Meditation on No Mind

चित्ताद्यन्तःकृतिर्नास्ति ममान्तर्भावयेदिति ।
विकल्पानामभावेन विकल्पैरुज्झितो भवेत् ॥ ९४ ॥

cittādyantaḥkṛtir nāsti mamāntar bhāvayed iti |
vikalpānām abhāvena vikalpair ujjhito bhavet || 94 ||

(The yogi) should reflect (*bhāvayet*) that "there is no inner (mental) organ within me, whether mind, (intellect or ego)." (Thus), because there are no thoughts (also), (the yogi) is devoid of them. (94) (93)

71) Discerning and detaching from Māyā and the Obscuring Coverings

माया विमोहिनी नाम कलायाः कलनं स्थितम् ।
इत्यादिधर्मं तत्त्वानां कलयन्न पृथग्भवेत् ॥ ९५ ॥

māyā vimohinī nāma kalāyāḥ kalanaṃ sthitam |
ityādidharmaṃ tattvānāṃ kalayan nā pṛthag bhavet || 95 ||

Māyā is deluding. The operation (*kalana*) of the Force (of limited agency) (*kalā*) (and the other *kañcukas*) goes on (functioning)—discerning (*kalayan*) this and the other properties of the reality principles (*tattva*) (with detachment), the individual soul (*nā*) is separated (from them). (95) (94)

72) Quelling desire the moment it arises

झगितीच्छां समुत्पन्नामवलोक्य शमं नयेत् ।
यत एव समुद्भूता ततस्तत्रैव लीयते ॥ ९६ ॥

jhagitīcchāṃ samutpannām avalokya śamaṃ nayet |
yata eva samudbhūtā tatas tatraiva līyate || 96 ||

Having observed that a desire (has just) arisen, it should be put to rest immediately. Thus, it dissolves away there itself, from whence it has come forth. (96) (95) 73)

73) The authentic Self devoid of desire and perception

यदा ममेच्छा नोत्पन्ना ज्ञानं वा कस्तदास्मि वै ।
तत्त्वतोऽहं तथा भूतस्तल्लीनस्तन्मना भवेत् ॥ ९७ ॥

yadā mamecchā notpannā jñānaṃ vā kas tadāsmi vai |
tattvato'haṃ tathābhūtas tallīnas tanmanā bhavet || 97 ||

(Reflecting:) "When my will or knowledge have not arisen, who am I then?—Indeed, I am as I truly am!" being such (i.e. consciousness and bliss), merged in that, he becomes one with that. (97)

74) Meditation on the place of the emergence of desire and perception

इच्छायामथवा ज्ञाने जाते चित्तं निवेशयेत् ।
आत्मबुद्ध्यानन्यचेतास्ततस्तत्त्वार्थदर्शनम् ॥ ९८ ॥

icchāyām athavā jñāne jāte cittaṃ niveśayet |
ātmabuddhyānanyacetās tatas tattvārthadarśanam || 98 ||

(At the very instant) when a desire or perception has (just) arisen, (but is as yet without an object), one whose attention is not directed towards anything else, should place the mind (where it emerges, cultivating) the notion (*buddhi*) that (this is) the Self. (Thus, he) then (has) a vision of what truly exists (*tattvārtha*). (98) (97)

75) Knowledge is without cause, baseless and deceptive—none possesses it

निर्मित्तं भवेज्ज्ञानं निराधारं भ्रमात्मकम् ।
तत्त्वतः कस्यचिन्नैतदेवंभावी शिवः प्रिये ॥ ९९ ॥

nirnimittaṃ bhavej jñānaṃ nirādhāraṃ bhramātmakam |
tattvataḥ kasyacin naitad evaṃbhāvī śivaḥ priye || 99 ||

(All) knowledge is without (outer, independent) cause, baseless and deceptive. In reality, this (knowledge) does not belong to anybody. One who abides in this way (with this attitude), O dear one, is Śiva. (99) (98)

76) The same consciousness nature is in all bodies and is everything

चिद्धर्मा सर्वदेहेषु विशेषो नास्ति कुत्रचित् ।
अतश्च तन्मयं सर्वं भावयन्भवजिज्जनः ॥ १०० ॥

ciddharmā sarvadeheṣu viśeṣo nāsti kutracit |
ataś ca tanmayaṃ sarvaṃ bhāvayan bhavajij janaḥ || 100 ||

The one, whose nature (*dharma*) is consciousness, is present in all bodies; there is no difference anywhere. Thus, a person engaged in contemplating (*bhāvayan*) everything as being of that nature conquers phenomenal existence. (100) (99)

77) Quelling negative emotions and states of mind the moment they arise

कामक्रोधलोभमोहमदमात्सर्यगोचरे ।
बुद्धिं निस्तिमितां कृत्वा तत्तत्त्वमवशिष्यते ॥ १०१ ॥

kāmakrodhalobhamohamadamātsaryagocare |
buddhiṃ nistimitāṃ kṛtvā tat tattvam avaśiṣyate || 101 ||

Having halted (the agitation of) the mind (*buddhi*) when (sexual) desire, anger, greed, delusion, madness, and envy (are about to arise), what remains is that (one, supreme) reality (of consciousness that underlies it). (101) (100)

78) Meditating on the universe as a magic show or a moving picture

इन्द्रजालमयं विश्वं व्यस्तं वा चित्रकर्मवत् ।
भ्रमद्वा ध्यायतः सर्वं पश्यतश्च सुखोद्गमः ॥ १०२ ॥

indrajālamayaṃ viśvaṃ nyastaṃ vā citrakarmavat |
bhramad vā dhyāyataḥ sarvaṃ paśyataś ca sukhodgamaḥ || 102 ||

Contemplating the universe as a magic show, or as projected (*nyasta*) (onto a canvas) like (painting) a picture, or in (constant) motion: viewing everything (in this way, one experiences) the emergence of bliss. (102) (101) 79)

79) The centre between pleasure and pain

न चित्तं निक्षिपेद्दुःखे न सुखे वा परिक्षिपेत् ।
भैरवि ज्ञायतां मध्ये किं तत्त्वमवशिष्यते ॥ १०३ ॥

na cittaṃ nikṣiped duḥkhe na sukhe vā parikṣipet |
bhairavi jñāyatāṃ madhye kiṃ tattvam avaśiṣyate || 103 ||

Cast not the mind into suffering nor into pleasure. Know, O Bhairavī! what (that) reality is that remains in the middle (state between them). (103)

80) Abandoning embodied subjectivity to become omnipresent

विहाय निजदेहास्थां सर्वत्रास्मीति भावयन् ।
दृढेन मनसा दृष्ट्या नान्येक्षिण्या सुखी भवेत् ॥ १०४ ॥

vihāya nijadehāsthāṃ sarvatrāsmīti bhāvayan |
dṛḍhena manasā dṛṣṭyā nānyekṣiṇyā sukhī bhavet || 104 ||

After abandoning (all) regard (*āsthā*) for his own body, reflecting (*bhāvayan*) that "I am everywhere" with a firm mind and undistracted vision, (the yogi) is blissful. (104)

81) Rising from the perception of the particular to the omnipresent

घटादौ यच्च विज्ञानमिच्छाद्यं वा ममान्तरे ।
नैव सर्वगतं जातं भावयन्निति सर्वगः ॥ १०५ ॥

ghaṭādau yac ca vijñānam icchādyaṃ vā mamāntare |
naiva sarvagataṃ jātaṃ bhāvayan iti sarvagaḥ || 105 ||

"The perception present when (perceiving an outer object), such as a jar or the desire and the like is not (just) within me, it has become omnipresent." Meditating (*bhāvayan*) in this way, (the yogi) becomes omnipresent. (105) (104)

82) The relationship between subject and object

ग्राह्यग्राहकसंवित्तिः सामान्या सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
योगिनां तु विशेषोऽस्ति संबन्धे सावधानता ॥ १०६ ॥

grāhyagrāhakasaṃvittiḥ sāmānyā sarvadehinām |
yogināṃ tu viśeṣo'sti saṃbandhe sāvadhānatā || 106 ||

The perception of subject and object is common to all embodied beings. What distinguishes yogis (from the others is that they pay careful) attention to (their) relationship. (106) (105)

83) Detachment from the body by experiencing the consciousness in others' bodies like one's own

स्ववदन्यशरीरेऽपि संवित्तिमनुभावयेत् ।
अपेक्षां स्वशरीरस्य त्यक्त्वा व्यापी दिनैर्भवेत् ॥ १०७ ॥

svavad anyaśarīre'pi saṃvittim anubhāvayet |
apekṣāṃ svaśarīrasya tyaktvā vyāpī dinair bhavet || 107 ||

One should experience (*anubhāvayet*) the consciousness in someone else's body also as (one does within) one's own. Giving up concern for one's own body, one becomes (all) pervading within days. (107) (106)

84) Cessation of thought, self-realization and identification with Deity

निराधारं मनः कृत्वा विकल्पान् न विकल्पयेत् ।
तदात्मपरमात्मत्वे भैरवो मृगलोचने ॥ १०८ ॥

nirādhāraṃ manaḥ kṛtvā vikalpān na vikalpayet |
tadātmaparamātmatve bhairavo mṛgalocane || 108 ||

Freeing the mind of (all) support, one should not conceive (any) thoughts. O gazelle-eyed one, then (the individual) self is (merged in) the Supreme Self and so is (recognized to be) Bhairava. (108) (107)

85) Meditation on Śiva's attributes leads to identification with Him

सर्वज्ञः सर्वकर्ता च व्यापकः परमेश्वरः ।
स एवाहं शैवधर्मा इति दाढ्र्याद्भवेच्छिवः ॥ १०९ ॥

sarvajñaḥ sarvakartā ca vyāpakaḥ parameśvaraḥ |
sa evāhaṃ śaivadharmā iti dārḍhyād bhavec chivaḥ || 109 ||

"The Supreme Lord is omniscient, does everything and is (all) pervading. I myself am He, who possesses Śiva's attributes." By the firmness (and stability of this conviction), one becomes Śiva. (109) (108)

86) Flames are fire, waves are the sea, rays are the sun and universe am I, Bhairava

जलस्येवोर्मयो वह्नेर्ज्वालाभङ्ग्यः प्रभा रवेः ॥
ममैव भैरवस्यैता विश्वभङ्ग्यो विभेदिताः ॥ ११० ॥

jalasyevormayo vahner jvālābhaṅgyaḥ prabhā raveḥ |
mamaiva bhairavasyaitā viśvabhaṅgyo vibheditāḥ || 110 ||

(Just as) waves are (those) of water itself (*eva*), flames of fire and rays of the sun, (in the same way) these cosmic waves of Bhairava, differentiated (from Him and one another) are my very own. (110) (109)

87) Wandering around and falling exhausted to the ground

भ्रान्त्वा भ्रान्त्वा शरीरेण त्वरितं भुवि पातनात् ।
क्षोभशक्तिविरामेण परा संजायते दशा ॥ १११ ॥

bhrāntvā bhrāntvā śarīreṇa tvaritaṃ bhuvi pātanāt |
kṣobhaśaktivirāmeṇa parā saṃjāyate daśā || 111 ||

After wandering about (for a long time) repeatedly, by falling quickly onto the ground with the body (thoroughly exhausted) and relaxing the power (that) agitates (the wayfarer's body), the supreme state arises. (111) (110)

88) Realization at the end of the agitation due to the incapacity of the senses and paralysis of the mind due to ignorance

आधारेष्वथवाऽशक्त्याऽज्ञानाच्चित्तलयेन वा ॥
जातशक्तिसमावेशक्षोभान्ते भैरवं वपुः ॥ ११२ ॥

ādhāreṣv athavā'śaktyā 'jñānāc cittalayena vā |
jātaśaktisamāveśakṣobhānte bhairavaṃ vapuḥ || 112 ||

Bhairava's body (manifests) at the end of the agitation caused by the penetration of the power (of consciousness) that arises due to the incapacity of the (senses to operate) in (their) foundations or else by the dissolving away of the mind (*cittalaya*) (and its paralysis) due to ignorance. (112) (111) 89)

Immediate Liberation by Gazing outwards, viewing the Light Within

89) Staring without blinking

संप्रदायमिमं देवि शृणु सम्यग्वदाम्यहम् ।
कैवल्यं जायते सद्यो नेत्रयोः स्तब्धमात्रयोः ॥ ११३ ॥

saṃpradāyam imaṃ devi śṛṇu samyag vadāmy aham |
kaivalyaṃ jāyate sadyo netrayoḥ stabdhamātrayoḥ || 113 ||

O Goddess, listen to this, the traditional teaching (*saṃpradāya*). I shall tell (you what it is) properly. The liberated state (*kaivalya*) arises immediately, just when the eyes are fixed without blinking. (113) (112)

90) Blocking the ears and the lower door, meditating on Unstruck Sound

संकोचं कर्णयोः कृत्वा ह्यधोद्वारे तथैव च ।
अनच्कमहलं ध्यायन्विशेद्ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥ ११४ ॥

saṃkocaṃ karṇayoḥ kṛtvā hy adhodvāre tathaiva ca |
anackam ahalaṃ dhyāyan viśed brahma sanātanam || 114 ||

Having blocked the ears (with the thumbs) and so too the lower door (of the anus with the heel), meditating on (Unstruck Sound) devoid of vowels and consonants, (the yogi) enters the eternal Brahman. (114)

91) Gazing down into the abyss or a deep well

कूपादिके महागर्ते स्थित्वोपरि निरीक्षणात् ।
अविकल्पमतेः सम्यक् सद्यश्चित्तलयः स्फुटम् ॥ ११५ ॥

kūpādike mahāgarte sthitvopari nirīkṣaṇāt |
avikalpamateḥ samyak sadyaś cittalayaḥ sphuṭam || 115 ||

Standing on the edge (of a deep) well and the like, (or) a great abyss, by gazing (down into it), the mind of one whose mind is free of thoughts properly, immediately, and clearly dissolves away. (115) (113)

92) Śiva is present everywhere internally and externally

यत्र यत्र मनो याति बाह्ये वाभ्यन्तरेऽपि वा ।
तत्र तत्र शिवावस्था व्यापकत्वात्क्व यास्यति ॥ ११६ ॥

yatra yatra mano yāti bāhye vābhyantare'pi vā |
tatra tatra śivāvasthā vyāpakatvāt kva yāsyati || 116 ||

Wherever the mind goes, whether outside or within, Śiva's state is present there. (Śiva) pervades (everything), so where (else) could it go? (116) (114)

93) Wherever the Lord's consciousness manifests in the domain of the senses, their object dissolves away into it

यत्र यत्राक्षमार्गेण चैतन्यं व्यज्यते विभोः ।
तस्य तन्मात्रधर्मित्वाच्चिल्लयाद्भरितात्मता ॥ ११७ ॥

yatra yatrākṣamārgeṇa caitanyaṃ vyajyate vibhoḥ |
tasya tanmātradharmitvāc cillayād bharitātmatā || 117 ||

Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of the senses, (their object) dissolves away within consciousness, and so, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude (as all things manifests as the yogi's true nature). (117) (115)

94) Attending to the first and last moments of intense emotion and hunger

क्रोधाद्यन्ते भये शोके गह्वरे वा रणाद्द्रुते ।
कुतूहले क्षुधाद्यन्ते ब्रह्मसत्तामयी दशा ॥ ११८ ॥

krodhādyante bhaye śoke gahvare vā raṇād drute |
kutūhale kṣudhādyante brahmasattā samīpagā || 118 ||

Just when anger begins and ends, when in fear, grieving, (facing a) deep pit, or fleeing from battle, when (intensely) curious, or when hunger starts or ends, the Being of the Brahman stands close at hand. (118) (116)

95) Meditation by means of recollection

वस्तुषु समर्यमाणेषु दृष्टे देशे मनस्त्यजेत् ।
स्वशरीरं निराधारं कृत्वा प्रसरति प्रभुः ॥ ११९ ॥

vastuṣu smaryamāṇeṣu dṛṣṭe deśe manas tyajet |
svaśarīraṃ nirādhāraṃ kṛtvā prasarati prabhuḥ || 119 ||

(Remembering the past,) abandon the mind in a place (previously) seen amongst the things recalled. Having freed its own body of support (in this way), the Lord spreads forth (and reveals Himself). (119) (117)

96) Withdrawing the gaze

क्वचिद्वस्तुनि विन्यस्य शनैर्दृष्टिं निवर्तयेत् ।
तज्ज्ञानं चित्तसहितं देवि शून्यालयो भवेत् ॥ १२० ॥

kvacid vastuni vinyasya śanair dṛṣṭiṃ nivartayet |
tajjñānaṃ cittasahitaṃ devi śūnyālayo bhavet || 120 ||

Having placed the gaze somewhere (on some) object, slowly withdraw (it), along with the mind and the perception of it. (Then), O Goddess, one becomes the abode of the Void. (120) (118)

97) Devotion develops into the insight that is Śiva's power

भक्त्युद्रेकाद्विरक्तस्य यादृशी जायते मतिः ॥
सा शक्तिः शांकरी नित्यं भावयेत्तां ततः शिवः ॥ १२१ ॥

bhaktyudrekād viraktasya yādṛśī jāyate matiḥ ||
sā śaktiḥ śāṃkarī nityaṃ bhāvayet tāṃ tataḥ Śivaḥ || 121 ||

The kind of intuitive insight (*mati*) that arises in one who is detached (from the world) by virtue of (his) intense devotion, is Śaṅkara's power. Contemplate (*bhāvayet*) her constantly (and) thus (become) Śiva. (121) (119)

98) Meditation on the Emptiness of Absence

वस्त्वन्तरे वेद्यमाने शनैर्वस्तुषु शून्यता ।
तामेव मनसा ध्यात्वा विदितोऽपि प्रशाम्यति ॥ १२२ ॥

vastvantare vedyamāne śanair vastuṣu śūnyatā |
tām eva manasā dhyātvā vidito'pi praśāmyati || 122 ||

(After an object has been perceived), when (the pure consciousness) within an object is being perceived, gradually the emptiness (of pure consciousness is experienced) within (all other) things (as the emptiness of their absence). Having contemplated that (emptiness) itself with the mind (free of thought), one becomes tranquil, even if (the object) is (still) perceived. (122) (120)

99) Nothing is pure or impure, enjoined or prohibited

किंचिज्ज्ञैर्या स्मृता शुद्धिः साऽशुद्धिः शंभुदर्शने ।
न शुचिर्ह्यशुचिस्तस्मान्निर्विकल्पः सुखी भवेत् ॥ १२३ ॥

kiṃcijjñair yā smṛtā śuddhiḥ sā'śuddhiḥ śaṃbhudarśane |
na śucir hy aśucis tasmān nirvikalpaḥ sukhī bhavet || 123 ||

That, which (people) with little understanding consider to be purity (*śuddhi*), is not purity according to the Śaiva teachings. There is neither clean (*śuci*) nor unclean. Therefore, one who is free of (such dichotomizing) notions is happy (and blissful). (123) (121)

100) Bhairava is omnipresent and known to all. Nothing exists apart from Him

सर्वत्र भैरवो भावः सामान्येष्वपि गोचरः ।
न च तद्व्यतिरेकेण परोऽस्तीत्यद्वया गतिः ॥ १२४ ॥

sarvatra bhairavo bhāvaḥ sāmānyeṣv api gocaraḥ |
na ca tadvyatirekeṇa paro'stīty advayā gatiḥ || 124 ||

Bhairava's Being is everywhere. It is in the field (of the understanding) of common folk also. (He, who knows that) nothing else exists apart from Him, (attains) the non-dual state. (124) (122)

101) Equality towards friend and foe, honour and dishonour

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च समो मानावमानयोः ।
ब्रह्मणः परिपूर्णत्वादिति ज्ञात्वा सुखी भवेत् ॥ १२५ ॥

samaḥ śatrau ca mitre ca samo mānāvamānayoḥ |
brahmaṇaḥ paripūrṇatvād iti jñātvā sukhī bhavet || 125 ||

(One who is) equal towards friend and foe (alike), the same when honored or insulted, because the Brahman (which is his true nature is) full (and perfect), having known this, is (always) happy. (125) (123)

102) The balance in the centre between aversion and attachment

न द्वेषं भावयेत्क्वापि न रागं भावयेत्क्वचित् ।
रागद्वेषविनिर्मुक्तौ मध्ये ब्रह्म प्रसर्पति ॥ १२६ ॥

na dveṣaṃ bhāvayet kvāpi na rāgaṃ bhāvayet kvacit |
rāgadveṣavinirmuktau madhye brahma prasarpati || 126 ||

One should neither cultivate (*bhāvayet*) aversion nor attachment in any circumstance. The Brahman extends in the centre (in between. these extremes), which is free of attachment and hatred. (126) (124)

103) Meditation on Absence and Transcendence

यदवेद्यं यदग्राह्यं यच्छून्यं यदभावगम् ।
तत्सर्वं भैरवं भाव्यं तदन्ते बोधसंभवः ॥ १२७ ॥

yad avedyaṃ yad agrāhyaṃ yac chūnyaṃ yad abhāvagam |
tat sarvaṃ bhairavaṃ bhāvyaṃ tadante bodhasaṃbhavaḥ || 127 ||

That which is not an object of knowledge, that cannot be grasped, that is Void and is present in the absence (of things) (*abhāva*), should all be contemplated (*bhāvya*) as Bhairava. (Finally) at the end (and culmination) of that (meditation, the realized yogi experiences) the birth of (awakened) consciousness. (127) (125)

104) The movement from outer space to the Void of consciousness

नित्ये निराश्रये शून्ये व्यापके कलनोज्झिते ।
बाह्याकाशे मनः कृत्वा निराकाशं समाविशेत् ॥ १२८ ॥

nitye nirāśraye śūnye vyāpake kalanojjhite |
bāhyākāśe manaḥ kṛtvā nirākāśaṃ samāviśet || 128 ||

Once the mind has been fixed on an external space, which is permanent, without support, empty, pervasive, and without a cause (*kalanojjhita*), it enters (and is absorbed into the transcendent) absence of space (which is continuous, uninterrupted consciousness). (128) (126)

105) The Disappearance of the Wondering Mind

यत्र यत्र मनो याति तत्तत्तेनैव तत्क्षणम् ।
परित्यज्यानवस्थित्या निस्तरङ्गस्ततो भवेत् ॥ १२९ ॥

yatra yatra mano yāti tat tat tenaiva tatkṣaṇam |
parityajyānavasthityā nistaraṅgas tato bhavet || 129 ||

Wherever the mind moves, having by that (very mind) at that (very) moment abandoned whatever (it moves to), it has no fixed place and so (left without support), one becomes free of (its) fluctuations. (129) (127)

106) Meaning of Bhairava's name and its utterance

भिया सर्वं रवयति सर्वदो व्यापकोऽखिले ।
इति भैरवशब्दस्य संततोच्चारणाच्छिवः ॥ १३० ॥

bhiyā sarvaṃ ravayati sarvado vyāpako'khile |
iti bhairavaśabdasya santatoccāraṇāc chivaḥ || 130 ||

(Bhairava is so called) because (He) causes everything to resound (*ravayati*) with (the cry of) fear. He gives all things (*sarvada*) and He pervades (*vyāpaka*) within everything. Thus, by uttering the word 'Bhairava' at length, (one becomes) Śiva. (130) (128)

107) Cultivating subjectivity devoid of objective support

अहं ममेदमित्यादिप्रतिपत्तिप्रसङ्गतः ।
निराधारे मनो याति तद्ध्यानप्रेरणाच्छमी ॥ १३१ ॥

ahaṃ mamedam ityādipratipattiprasaṅgataḥ |
nirādhāre mano yāti taddhyānapreraṇāc chamī || 131 ||

In the course of ascertainments such as "I am", "this is mine" and the like, the mind enters (a state of subjectivity) devoid of (objective) support. Impelled (and inspired) by that meditation, one becomes peaceful. (131) (129)

108) The constant meditation of the Lord's Divine Attributes

नित्यो विभुर्निराधारो व्यापकश्चाखिलाधिपः ।
शब्दान् प्रतिक्षणं ध्यायन् कृतार्थोऽर्थानुरूपतः ॥ १३२ ॥

nityo vibhur nirādhāro vyāpakaś cākhilādhipaḥ |
śabdān pratikṣaṇaṃ dhyāyan kṛtārtho'rthānurūpataḥ || 132 ||

'Eternal', 'omnipresent', 'without support', 'all-pervading', and 'Lord of all'—meditating every moment on (these) words, one achieves the goal in accord with (their) meaning. (132) (130)

109) The universe is an illusory magic show

अतत्त्वमिन्द्रजालाभमिदं सर्वमवस्थितम् ।
किं तत्त्वमिन्द्रजालस्य इति दाढ्र्याच्छमं व्रजेत् ॥ १३३ ॥

atattvam indrajālābham idaṃ sarvam avasthitam |
kiṃ tattvam indrajālasya iti dārḍhyāc chamaṃ vrajet || 133 ||

"All this (universe) is without reality, like a magic show (*indrajāla*), for what reality is there of a magic show?" By the firmness (of this conviction), one attains peace. (133) (131)

110) The Self is unchanging and the universe is Void of existence

आत्मनो निर्विकारस्य क्व ज्ञानं क्व च वा क्रिया ।
ज्ञानायत्ता बहिर्भावा अतः शून्यमिदं जगत् ॥ १३४ ॥

ātmano nirvikārasya kva jñānaṃ kva ca vā kriyā |
jñānāyattā bahirbhāvā ataḥ śūnyam idaṃ jagat || 134 ||

How can the unchanging Self possess knowledge or action? (And yet all) external entities depend on perception (*jñāna*) (in order to be known). (Clearly), therefore, this universe is Void (of any existence of its own). (134) (132)

111) The world is just a reflection in the intellect. Bondage and liberation are just frightening thoughts

न मे बन्धो न मोक्षो मे भीतस्यैता विभीषिकाः ।
प्रतिबिम्बमिदं बुद्धेर्जलेष्विव विवस्वतः ॥ १३४ ॥

na me bandho na mokṣo me bhītasyaitā vibhīṣikāḥ |
pratibimbam idaṃ buddher jaleṣv iva vivasvataḥ || 135 ||

"There is neither bondage nor liberation for me." These are the frightening (thoughts) of one who is fearful. (But in actual fact), this (world) is (just) a reflection of the intellect, like (the reflection of) the sun in the waters. (135) (133)

112) Abandoning the senses and abiding in the Self

इन्द्रियद्वारकं सर्वं सुखदुःखादिसंगगम् ।
इतीन्द्रियाणि संत्यज्य स्वस्थः स्वात्मनि वर्तते ॥ १३६ ॥

indriyadvārakaṃ sarvaṃ sukhaduḥkhādisaṃgamam |
itīndriyāṇi saṃtyajya svasthaḥ svātmani vartate || 136 ||

(All) association with pleasure, pain and the like occur through the senses. Therefore, (knowing this), one who, having abandoned the senses, is established within himself (undistracted by their activity), abides within his own (true) nature. (136) (134)

113) The object of knowledge is just knowledge alone

ज्ञानप्रकाशकं सर्वं सर्वेणात्मा प्रकाशकः ।
एकमेकस्वभावत्वात् ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं विभाव्यते ॥ १३७ ॥

jñānaprakāśakaṃ sarvaṃ sarveṇātmā prakāśakaḥ |
ekam ekasvabhāvatvāt jñānaṃ jñeyaṃ vibhāvyate || 137 ||

Everything (in this world) is illumined by knowledge and by virtue of all (things) the Self is the illuminator. Knowledge alone, as its nature is one, is perceived to be the object of knowledge. (137) (135)

114) The cessation of the mind, intellect, breath and the Self

मानसं चेतना शक्तिरात्मा चेति चतुष्टयम् ।
यदा प्रिये परिक्षीणं तदा तद्भैरवं वपुः ॥ १३८ ॥

mānasaṃ cetanā śaktir ātmā ceti catuṣṭayam |
yadā priye parikṣīṇaṃ tadā tad bhairavaṃ vapuḥ || 138 ||

O Dear One, if the group of four, namely, (all that is) mental (*mānasa*), (intellectual) awareness (*cetanā*), the energy (of the vital breath) (*śakti*) and the (individual) self (*ātman*), wanes away completely, then that (which remains) is Bhairava's body (*vapus*). (138) (136)

The closing declarations

The one hundred and twelve teachings

निस्तरङ्गोपदेशानां शतमुक्तं समासतः ।
द्वादशाभ्यधिकं देवि यज्ज्ञात्वा ज्ञानविज्जनः ॥ १३९ ॥

nistaraṅgopadeśānāṃ śatam uktaṃ samāsataḥ |
dvādaśābhyadhikaṃ devi yaj jñātvā jñānavij janaḥ || 139 ||

O Goddess! I have revealed (these) one hundred and twelve teachings concerning (the state) free of the waves (of the fluctuations of thought) in brief, knowing which a person possesses the knowledge (that frees from bondage). (139) (137)

The successful Yogi's powers, accomplishments and liberation

अत्र चैकतमे युक्तो जायते भैरवः स्वयम् ।
वाचा करोति कर्माणि शापानुग्रहकारकः ॥ १४० ॥

atra caikatame yukto jāyate bhairavaḥ svayam |
vācā karoti karmāṇi śāpānugrahakārakaḥ || 140 ||

He who applies (himself) here to any one of (these meditations) becomes Bhairava Himself. He curses and graces (others at will) and performs (all his) actions by (his) speech (alone). (140) (139) (138)

अजरामरतामेति सोऽणिमादिगुणान्वितः ।
योगिनीनां प्रियो देवि सर्वमेलापकाधिपः ॥ १४१ ॥
जीवन्नपि विमुक्तोऽसौ कुर्वन्नपि च चेष्टितम् ।

ajarāmaratām eti so'ṇimādiguṇānvitaḥ |
yoginīnāṃ priyo devi sarvamelāpakādhipaḥ || 141 ||
jīvan api vimukto'sau kurvan api ca ceṣṭitam |

O Goddess! (such a yogi) attains freedom from old age and death and is endowed with (all the yogi's) abilities (*guṇa*) beginning with the power to make himself small at will (*aṇimā*). He is the beloved of the Yoginīs and presides over all the gatherings (of Siddhas and Yoginīs). Although he lives, he is liberated and even though he (continues) to act (in his daily life, he is untainted). (141–142ab) (139–140ab)

The Inner Equivalents of Ritual

श्रीदेवी उवाच
इदं यदि वपुर्देव परायाश्च महेश्वर ॥ १४२ ॥
एवमुक्तव्यवस्थायां जप्यते को जपश्च कः ।
ध्यायते को महानाथ पूज्यते कश्च तृप्यति ॥ १४३ ॥
हूयते कस्य वा होमो यागः कस्य च किं कथम् ।

śrīdevī uvāca
idaṃ yadi vapur deva parāyāś ca maheśvara || 142 ||
evamuktavyavasthāyāṃ japyate ko japaś ca kaḥ |
dhyāyate ko mahānātha pūjyate kaś ca tṛpyati || 143 ||
hūyate kasya vā homo yāgaḥ kasya ca kiṃ katham |

The venerable Goddess said:

O God! O Great Lord! If this is the nature (and body) (*vapus*) of (the Goddess) Parā, then in the state thus described, what (Mantra) is repeated, what is (that) repetition? Who meditates? O Great Lord, who is worshipped and gratified (by it)? (Who) offers oblation and whose is the offering? Whose is the sacrifice? What is it and how (is it offered)? (142cd-144ab) (140cd-142ab)

The Inner Repetition of Mantra (*japa*)

श्रीभैरव उवाच
एषात्र प्रक्रिया बाह्या स्थूलेष्वेवमृगेक्षणे ॥ १४४ ॥
भूयो भूयः परे भावे भावना भाव्यते हि या ।
जपः सोऽत्र स्वयं नादो मन्त्रात्मा जप्य ईदृशः ॥ १४५ ॥

śrībhairava uvāca
eṣātra prakriyā bāhyā sthūlety eva mṛgekṣaṇe || 144 ||

bhūyo bhūyaḥ pare bhāve bhāvanā bhāvyate hi yā |
japaḥ so'tra svayaṃ nādo mantrātmā japya īdṛśaḥ || 145 ||

O gazelle-eyed Goddess! This procedure (*prakriyā*) (of reciting Mantras and performing rituals) here, (in this scripture, is considered to be) external and gross only. That contemplation (*bhāvanā*) which is experienced (*bhāvyate*) (and takes place) repeatedly again and again in the supreme state is here (according to this scripture) the repeated recitation of Mantra (*japa*). It is the spontaneous Sound (of consciousness). Such is the nature of Mantra that should be repeatedly recited. (144cd-145) (142cd-143)

Inner Visualization and Meditation (*dhyāna*)

ध्यानं हि निश्चला बुद्धिर्निराकारा निराश्रया ।
न तु ध्यानं शरीराक्षिमुखहस्तादिकल्पना ॥ १४६ ॥

dhyānaṃ hi niścalā buddhir nirākārā nirāśrayā |
na tu dhyānaṃ śarīrākṣimukhahastādikalpanā || 146 ||

Meditation (*dhyana*) is indeed the immobile, formless and unsustained intellect. Meditation is certainly not imagining the face and hands etc. of the body (of a deity). (146) (144)

Inner Worship

पूजा नाम न पुष्पाद्यैर्या मतिः क्रियते दृढा ।
निर्विकल्पे परे व्योम्नि सा पूजा ह्यादराल्लयः ॥ १४७ ॥

pūjā nāma na puṣpādyair yā matiḥ kriyate dṛḍhā |
nirvikalpe pare vyomni sā pūjā hy ādarāl layaḥ || 147 ||

(Real) worship (*pūjā*) is not (performed by just offering) flowers and the like. It is that which makes the intuitive mind (*mati*) firm (and stable) in the Supreme Sky (of transcendental consciousness), free of thought constructs. By the respectful (and devout performance of) that (kind of) worship (the mind) certainly dissolves away. (147) (145)

Perfect fulfilment attained by practicing each meditation

अत्रैकतमयुक्तिस्थे योत्पद्येत दिनाद्दिनम् ।
भरिताकारता सात्र तृप्तिरत्यन्तपूर्णता ॥ १४८ ॥

atraikatamayuktisthe yotpadyeta dinād dinam |
bharitākāratā sātra tṛptir atyantapūrṇatā || 148 ||

The state which is (Bhairava's) form filled (with all things) that arises day after day when one abides here in any one of (these) practices (*yukti*), is that (spiritual) satisfaction (experienced) here which is perfect plentitude. (148) (146)

The Inner Oblation

महाशून्यालये वह्नौ भूताक्षविषयादिकम् ।
हूयते मनसा सार्धं स होमश्चेतनास्रुचा ॥ १४९ ॥
यागोऽत्र परमेशानि तुष्टिरानन्दलक्षणा ।

mahāśūnyālaye vahnau bhūtākṣaviṣayādikam |
hūyate manasā sārdhaṃ sa homaś cetanāsrucā || 149 ||
yāgo'tra parameśāni tuṣṭir ānandalakṣaṇā |

The offering of (all) the elements, the senses and (their) objects etc, along with the mind into the fire which is the Abode of the Great Void with the sacrificial ladle of awareness—that is (true) oblation (*homa*). O Supreme Goddess, the sacrifice (*yāga*) here is the satisfaction which is bliss. (149–150ab) (147–148ab)

The sacred field of pilgrimage

क्षपणात्सर्वपापानां त्राणात्सर्वस्य पार्वति ॥ १५० ॥
रुद्रशक्तिसमावेशस्तत्क्षेत्रं भावना परा ।
अन्यथा तस्य तत्त्वस्य कापूजा कश्च तृप्यति ॥ १५१ ॥

kṣapaṇāt sarvapāpānāṃ trāṇāt sarvasya pārvati || 150 ||
rudraśaktisamāveśas tat kṣetraṃ bhāvanā parā |
anyathā tasya tattvasya kā pūjā kaś ca tṛpyati || 151 ||

O Pārvatī! the penetration of Rudra's power is that sacred place of pilgrimage (*kṣetra*) which is supreme contemplation (*parā bhāvanā*) because it removes (*kṣapanāt*) all sins and saves all (living beings) (*trānāt*). Otherwise, what worship (could there be) of that (non-dual) reality and who (could be) satisfied (thereby)? (150cd-151) (148cd-149)

Inner Bathing

स्वतन्त्रानन्दचिन्मात्रसारः स्वात्मा हि सर्वतः ।
आवेशनं तत्स्वरूपे स्वात्मनः स्नानमीरितम् ॥ १५२ ॥

svatantrānandacinmātrasāraḥ svātmā hi sarvataḥ |
āveśanaṃ tatsvarūpe svātmanaḥ snānam īritam || 152 ||

The essence of one's own Self is surely freedom, bliss and pure consciousness. (The purifying) bath is said to be the penetration in all respects of one's own Self into that essential nature. (152) (150)

The Worshipper, the offering and the Worshipped are one

यैरेव पूज्यते द्रव्यैस्तर्प्यते वा परापरः ।
यश्चैव पूजकः सर्वः स एवैकः क्व पूजनम् ॥ १५३ ॥

yair eva pūjyate dravyais tarpyate vā parāparaḥ |
yaś caiva pūjakaḥ sarvaḥ sa evaikaḥ kva pūjanam || 153 ||

Those sacrificial substances with which Parā and (Bhairava) the Supreme (Lord) (*parāpara*) are worshipped or with which they are offered libation and he who is the worshipper—all this is one only. What then remains of worship? (153) (151)

The Great Goddess and the Flow of the Breath

व्रजेत्प्राणो विशेज्जीव इच्छया कुटिलाकृतिः ।
दीर्घात्मा सा महादेवी परक्षेत्रं परापरा ॥ १५४ ॥

vrajet prāṇo viśej jīva icchayā kuṭilākṛtiḥ |
dīrghātmā sā mahādevī parakṣetraṃ parāparā || 154 ||

The exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) should exit and the living being (*apāna*—the inhaled breath) should enter. (Impelled) by the will, its form is crooked. That Great Goddess is extensive (*dīrghātmā*), both transcendent and immanent (*parāparā*). She is the most excellent sacred field (*kṣetra*). (154) (152)

अस्यामनुचरन् तिष्ठन् महानन्दमयेऽध्वरे ।
तया देव्या समाविष्टः परं भैरवमाप्नुयात् ॥ १५५ ॥
षट् शतानि दिवारात्रौ सहस्राण्येकविंशतिः ।
जपो देव्याः समुद्दिष्टः प्राणस्यान्ते सुदुर्लभः ॥ १५६ ॥

asyām anucaran tiṣṭhan mahānandamaye 'dhvare |
tayā devyā samāviṣṭaḥ paraṃ bhairavam āpnuyāt || 155 ||
ṣaṭ śatāni divā rātrau sahasrāṇy ekaviṃśatiḥ |
japo devyāḥ samuddiṣṭaḥ prāṇasyānte sudurlabhaḥ || 156 ||

Following along, and abiding within her, in the sacrificial rite made of Great Bliss, may he who is penetrated by that Goddess attain Supreme Bhairava. (155) (153)

Those who are fit to receive the teachings

इत्येतत्कथितं देवि परमामृतमुत्तमम् ।
एतच्च नैव कस्यापि प्रकाश्यम् तु कदाचन ॥ १५७ ॥
परशिष्ये खले क्रूरे अभक्ते गुरुपादयोः ।
निर्विकल्पमतीनां तु वीराणामुन्नतात्मनाम् ॥ १५८ ॥
भक्तानां गुरुवर्गस्य दातव्यं निर्विशङ्कया ।

ity etat kathitaṃ devi paramāmṛtam uttamam |
etac ca naiva kasyāpi prakāśyam tu kadācana || 157 ||
paraśiṣye khale krūre abhakte gurupādayoḥ |
nirvikalpamatīnāṃ tu vīrāṇām unnatātmanām || 158 ||
bhaktānāṃ guruvargasya dātavyaṃ nirviśaṅkayā |

Thus, O Goddess! I have told (you about) this most excellent, supreme (immortal) nectar. It should never be disclosed to anyone who is a disciple of another (tradition), who is evil and cruel, and is not devoted to (his) master's feet. (But this teaching) should certainly be given without hesitation to those elevated adepts (*vīra*) whose mind is free of thought and are devoted to the masters. (157–159ab) (155cd-157)

The supreme value of the teachings

ग्रामो राज्यं पुरं देशः पुत्रदारकुटुम्बकम् ॥ १५९ ॥
सर्वमेतत्परित्यज्य ग्राह्यमेतन्मृगेक्षणे ।
किमेभिरस्थिरैर्देवि स्थिरं परमिदं धनम् ॥ १६० ॥
प्राणा अपि प्रदातव्या न देयं परमामृतम् ।

grāmo rājyaṃ puraṃ deśaḥ putradārakuṭumbakam || 159 ||
sarvam etat parityajya grāhyam etan mṛgekṣaṇe |

kim ebhir asthirair devi sthiraṃ param idaṃ dhanam || 160 ||
prāṇā api pradātavyā na deyaṃ paramāmṛtam |

O Gazelle-eyed One! having abandoned all this, namely, (one's) village, kingdom, city and country, son, wife and family, one should lay hold of this (teaching). O Goddess! What is the use of these impermanent things? (Only) this supreme wealth is permanent. One can even give (one's) vital breaths (to others but) one should not give (this), the supreme nectar (of immortality). (159cd-161ab) (158–159)

Gratitude for the teachings

श्रीदेवी उवाच
देवदेव महादेव परितृप्तास्मि शंकर ॥ १६१ ॥
रुद्रयामलतन्त्रस्य सारमद्यावधारितम् ।
सर्वशक्तिप्रभेदानां हृदयं ज्ञातमद्य च ॥ १६२ ॥
इत्युक्त्वानन्दिता देवी कण्ठे लग्ना शिवस्य तु ॥ १६३ ॥

śrīdevī uvāca

devadeva mahādeva paritṛptāsmi śaṃkara || 161 ||
rudrayāmalatantrasya sāram adyāvadhāritam |
sarvaśaktiprabhedānāṃ hṛdayaṃ jñātam adya ca || 162 ||
ity uktvānanditā devī kaṇṭhe lagnā śivasya tu |

The Goddess said:

O God of the gods, O Great God! O Śaṅkara! I am completely satisfied. Today I have understood the essence of the Rudrayāmala Tantra. Today I have (come to) know the heart of all the various kinds of energies. Having said this, the Goddess, (thus) made blissful, embraced Śiva indeed. (161cd-163ab) (160–161)

APPENDIX 2

THE MEDITATIONS OF THE *VIJÑĀNABHAIRAVA* ARRANGED THEMATICALLY

The Great Goddess and the Flow of the Breath

ऊर्ध्वे प्राणो ह्यधो जीवो विसर्गात्मा परोच्चरेत् ।
उत्पत्तिद्वितयस्थाने भरणाद्भरिता स्थितिः ॥ २४ ॥

ūrdhve prāṇo hy adho jīvo visargātmā paroccaret |
utpattidvitayasthāne bharaṇāt bharitā sthitiḥ || 24 ||

The exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) (SAḤ) is above and the living being (the inhaled breath) (*jīva*) (HAṀ) is below; (the goddess) Parā, who is emission (*visarga*), is uttering forth (and manifesting in this way) within the two places where they originate. (The yogi attains) the state of fullness by filling (them). (24)

व्रजेत्प्राणो विशेज्जीव इच्छया कुटिलाकृतिः ।
दीर्घात्मा सा महादेवी परक्षेत्रं परापरा ॥ १५४ ॥

vrajet prāṇo viśej jīva icchayā kuṭilākṛtiḥ |
dīrghātmā sā mahādevī parakṣetraṃ parāparā || 154 ||

The exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) (SAḤ) should exit and the living being (*apāna*—the inhaled breath) (HAṀ) should enter. (Impelled) by the will, the form of (HA) is crooked. That Great Goddess (Parā) is extensive (*dīrghātmā*), both transcendent and immanent (*parāparā*). She is the most excellent sacred field (*kṣetra*). (154) (152)

अस्यामनुचरन् तिष्ठन् महानन्दमयेऽध्वरे ।
तया देव्या समाविष्टः परं भैरवमाप्नुयात् ॥ १५५ ॥
षट् शतानि दिवारात्रौ सहस्राण्येकविंशतिः ।
जपो देव्याः समुद्दिष्टः प्राणस्यान्ते सुदुर्लभः ॥ १५६ ॥

asyām anucaran tiṣṭhan mahānandamaye 'dhvare |
tayā devyā samāviṣṭaḥ paraṃ bhairavam āpnuyāt || 155 ||
ṣaṭ śatāni divā rātrau sahasrāṇy ekaviṃśatiḥ |
japo devyāḥ samuddiṣṭaḥ prāṇasyānte sudurlabhaḥ || 156 ||

Following along, and abiding within her, in the sacrificial rite made of Great Bliss, may he who is penetrated by that Goddess attain Supreme Bhairava. (155) (153)

मरुतोऽन्तर्बहिर्वापि वियद्युग्मानिवर्तनात् ।
भैरव्या भैरवस्येत्थं भैरवि व्यज्यते वपुः ॥ २५ ॥

maruto'antarbahirvāpi vidyudutyugmānivartanāt |
bhairavyā bhairavasyetthaṁ bhairavi vyajate vapuḥ || 25 ||

O Bhairavī, by not returning out from the two voids of the breath, whether internal or external, Bhairavī reveals in this way Bhairava's body. (25)

न व्रजेन्न विशेच्छक्तिर्मरुद्रूपा विकासिते ।
निर्विकल्पतया मध्ये तया भैरवरूपता ॥ २६ ॥

na vrajen na viśec chaktir marudrūpā vikāsite |
nirvikalpatayā madhye tayā bhairavarūpatā || 26 ||

The energy in the form of the vital breath should neither exit nor enter when the centre has unfolded (*vikāsite*) by the (one pointed) state free of thought (that places them there and abides there). (Thus there,) by that (same power, the Yogi's) Bhairava nature (is made manifest). (26)

कुम्भिता रेचिता वापि पूरिता वा यदा भवेत् ।
तदन्ते शान्तनामासौ शक्त्या शान्तः प्रकाशते ॥ २७ ॥

kumbhitā recitā vāpi pūritā vā yadā bhavet |
tadante śāntanāmāsau śaktyā śāntaḥ prakāśate || 27 ||

If (the power of the vital breath) called 'Tranquil' is retained, whether it has been ejected (in the course of exhalation) or else when filled (in the course of inhalation), in the end of that (practice) the Tranquil One manifests by means of (that same) power. (27)

पीनां च दुर्बलां शक्तिं ध्यात्वा द्वादशगोचरे ।
प्रविश्य हृदये ध्यायन्मुक्तः स्वातन्त्र्यमाप्नुयात् ॥ ५५ ॥

pīnāṃ ca durbalāṃ śaktiṃ dhyātvā dvādaśagocare |
praviśya hṛdaye dhyāyan svapnasvātantryam āpnuyāt || 55 ||

Having meditated on the energy (of the breath) fat (with its natural sound) as well as weak (and lengthy) in the region of the twelve (finger space then), once entered into the heart (when falling asleep) whilst engaged (in this) meditation, attains mastery (over his dreams). (55) (54)

वायुद्वयस्य संघट्टादन्तर्वा बहिरन्ततः ।
योगी समत्वविज्ञानसमुद्गमनभाजनम् ॥ ६४ ॥

vāyudvayasya saṃghaṭṭāt antar vā bahir antataḥ |
yogī samatvavijñānasamudgamanabhājanam || 64 ||

By the dynamic union (*saṃghaṭṭa*) of the two breaths, either within (the heart) or outside (in the End of the Twelve, meditating on the emptiness there), in the end, the yogi becomes the vessel of the emergence of the knowledge (that perceives) the equality (of all things). (64) (64)

सर्वस्रोतोनिबन्धेन प्राणशक्त्योर्ध्वया शनैः ।
पिपीलस्पर्शवेलायां प्रथते परमं सुखम् ॥ ६७ ॥

sarvasrotonibandhena prāṇaśaktyordhvayā śanaiḥ |
pipīlasparśavelāyāṃ prathate paramaṃ sukham || 67 ||

When (the yogi) feels a tactile sensation (like the crawling) of an ant (on the skin), due to the slow upward elevation of the energy of the vital breath brought about by checking all the currents (of the senses), he experiences supreme bliss. (67) (66)

Kuṇḍalinī

आमूलात्किरणाभासां सूक्ष्मात् सूक्ष्मतरात्मिकाम् ।
चिन्तयेत्तां द्विषट्कान्ते शाम्यन्तीं भैरवोदयः ॥ २८ ॥

āmūlāt kiraṇābhāsāṃ sūkṣmāt sūkṣmatarātmikām |
cintayet tāṃ dviṣaṭkānte śāmyantīṃ bhairavodayaḥ || 28 ||

One should think that that (energy of the vital breath), shining with rays, (emerges) from the Root, (and becomes progressively) more subtle than the subtle (as it ascends), coming to rest within the End of the Twelve (where) Bhairava awakes. (28)

उद्गच्छन्तीं तडिद्रूपां प्रतिचक्रं क्रमात्क्रमम् ।
ऊर्द्ध्वं मुष्टित्रयं यावत् तावदन्ते महोदयः ॥ २९ ॥

udgacchantīṃ taḍidrūpāṃ praticakraṃ kramāt kramam |
ūrddhvaṃ muṣṭitrayaṃ yāvat tāvad ante mahodayaḥ || 29 ||

(Contemplate Kuṇḍalinī, the power of the vital breath) in the form of lightning, ascending through each Wheel (one after the other) in due order up to the upper (space spanning the measure of) three clenched fists until, in the end, the Great Awakening! (29)

The Twelve Stations of Ascent

क्रमद्वादशकं सम्यग्द्वादशाक्षरभेदितम् ।
स्थूलसूक्ष्मपरस्थित्या मुक्त्वा मुक्त्वान्ततः शिवः ॥ ३० ॥

kramadvādaśakaṃ samyag dvādaśākṣarabheditam |
sthūlasūkṣmaparasthityā muktvā muktvāntataḥ śivaḥ || 30 ||

The sequence of twelve (centres within the body) is rightly linked to the twelve vowels. Abandoning one after another (their) gross, subtle and supreme states, in the end (the yogi attains) Śiva. (30)

The Valve between the Eyebrows

तयापूर्याशु मूर्धान्तं भङ्क्त्वा भ्रूक्षेपसेतुना ।
निर्विकल्पं मनः कृत्वा सर्वोर्ध्वे सर्वगोद्गमः ॥ ३१ ॥

tayāpūryāśu mūrdhāntaṃ bhaṅktvā bhrūkṣepasetunā |
nirvikalpaṃ manaḥ kṛtvā sarvordhve sarvagodgamaḥ || 31 ||

Having quickly filled (the body up to the Cavity of Brahmā) at the summit of the head with that (same energy of the vital breath) and blocked (the flow of the mind and breath) with the valve (formed by) arching the eyebrows, having (thus) freed the mind of thought, the omnipresent one emerges above all (things). (31)

The Middle Channel

मध्यनाडी मध्यसंस्था बिससूत्राभरूपया ।
ध्यातान्तर्व्योमया देव्या तया देवः प्रकाशते ॥ ३५ ॥

madhyanāḍī madhyasaṃsthā bisasūtrābharūpayā |
dhyātāntarvyomayā devyā tayā devaḥ prakāśate || 35 ||

The Middle Channel is situated in the middle (between the two breaths) in (an extremely subtle) form like a lotus fibre. Having meditated on that as the Goddess Who is the inner Void, the God is illumined by Her. (35)

The End of the Twelve

सर्वतः स्वशरीरस्य द्वादशान्ते मनो लयात् ।
दृढबुद्धेर्दृढीभूतं तत्त्वलक्ष्यं प्रवर्तते ॥ ५० ॥

sarvataḥ svaśarīrasya dvādaśānte manolayāt |
dṛḍhabuddher dṛḍhībhūtaṃ tattvalakṣyaṃ pravartate || 50 ||

By dissolving away the mind in all respects (completely) into the End of the Twelve of his own body, the goal which is (the one ultimate) reality comes forth well established for (the yogi whose) intellect is firm (and unwavering). (50) (49)

यथा तथा यत्र तत्र द्वादशान्ते मनः क्षिपेत् ।
प्रतिक्षणं क्षीणवृत्तेर्वैलक्षण्यं दिनैर्भवेत् ॥ ५१ ॥

yathā tathā yatra tatra dvādaśānte manaḥ kṣipet |
pratikṣaṇaṃ kṣīṇavṛtter vailakṣaṇyaṃ dinair bhavet || 51 ||

One should cast one's mind into the End of the Twelve in any way and wherever, every moment, and so for one (whose mental) activity (has) ceased (by this practice), an unparalleled (state) arises within (a few) days. (51) (50)

The Senses

शिखिपक्षैश्चित्ररूपैर्मण्डलैः शून्यपञ्चकम् ।
ध्यायतोऽनुत्तरे शून्ये प्रवेशो हृदये भवेत् ॥ ३२ ॥

śikhipakṣaiś citrarūpair maṇḍalaiḥ śūnyapañcakam |
dhyāyato'nuttare śūnye praveśo hṛdaye bhavet || 32 ||

Meditating on the five voids (of the sensations) by means of the spheres (of the senses), variegated in form (like) the feathers of a peacock, (the yogi) enters into the most excellent (*anuttara*) Void within the Heart (of consciousness). (32)

कररुद्धदृगस्त्रेण भ्रूमेदाद्द्वाररोधनात् ।
दृष्टे बिन्दौ क्रमाल्लीने तन्मध्ये परमा स्थितिः ॥ ३६ ॥

kararuddhadṛgastreṇa bhrūbhedād dvārarodhanāt |
dṛṣṭe bindau kramāl līne tanmadhye paramā sthitiḥ || 36 ||

By closing the doors (of the senses) with the weapon, that is, blocking (their) perception with the hands, and by piercing (the centre between) the eyebrows, when the Point (*bindu*) (of light) is perceived and gradually dissolves away, (the yogi attains) the supreme state in the centre (of the Void of consciousness). (36)

The slow upward elevation of the energy of the vital breath

सर्वस्रोतोनिबन्धेन प्राणशक्त्योर्ध्वया शनैः ।
पिपीलस्पर्शवेलायां प्रथते परमं सुखम् ॥ ६७ ॥

sarvasrotonibandhena prāṇaśaktyordhvayā śanaiḥ |
pipīlasparśavelāyāṃ prathate paramaṃ sukham || 67 ||

When (the yogi) feels a tactile sensation (like the crawling) of an ant (on the skin), due to the slow upward elevation of the energy of the vital breath brought about by checking all the currents (of the senses), he experiences supreme bliss. (67) (66)

यस्य कस्येन्द्रियस्यापि व्याघाताच्च निरोधतः
प्रविष्टस्याद्वये शून्ये तत्रैवात्मा प्रकाशते ॥ ८९ ॥

yasya kasyendriyasyāpi vyāghātāc ca nirodhataḥ
praviṣṭasyādvaye śūnye tatraivātmā prakāśate || 89 ||

(By blocking the function) of any one of the senses by a blow (from an external object) and by blocking (it voluntarily by striking oneself), the Self (*ātman*) (of the yogi) who has (thereby) entered the non-dual Void manifests there. (89) (88)

यत्र यत्राक्षमार्गेण चैतन्यं व्यज्यते विभोः ।
तस्य तन्मात्रधर्मित्वाच्चिल्लयाद्भरितात्मता ॥ ११७ ॥

yatra yatrākṣamārgeṇa caitanyaṃ vyajyate vibhoḥ |
tasya tanmātradharmitvāc cillayād bharitātmatā || 117 ||

Wherever the (universal) consciousness of the all-pervading Lord is revealed through the path of the senses, (their object) dissolves away within consciousness, and so, because it possesses that (very) same nature alone, (the Lord's) state of (perfect) plenitude (as all things manifests as the yogi's true nature). (117) (115)

करङ्किण्या क्रोधनया भैरव्या लेलिहानया ।
खेचर्या दृष्टिकाले च परावाप्तिः प्रकाशते ॥ ७७ ॥

karaṅkiṇyā krodhanayā bhairavyā lelihānayā |
khecaryā dṛṣṭikāle ca parā vyāptiḥ prakāśate || 77 ||

By (practicing) Karaṅkiṇī, Krodhanā, Bhairavī, Lelihānā and Khecarī (mūdras) when perception takes place, the pervasion of (the Goddess) Parā shines. (77)

इन्द्रियद्वारकं सर्वं सुखदुःखादिसंगगम् ।
इतीन्द्रियाणि संत्यज्य स्वस्थः स्वात्मनि वर्तते ॥ १३६ ॥

indriyadvārakaṃ sarvaṃ sukhaduḥkhādisaṃgamam |
itīndriyāṇi saṃtyajya svasthaḥ svātmani vartate || 136 ||

(All) association with pleasure, pain and the like occur through the senses. Therefore, (knowing this), one who, having abandoned the senses, is established within himself (undistracted by their activity), abides within his own (true) nature. (136) (134)

Sound and Mantra

अनाहते पात्रकर्णेऽभग्नशब्दे सरिद्द्रुते ।
शब्दब्रह्मणि निष्णातः परं ब्रह्माधिगच्छति ॥ ३८ ॥

anāhate pātrakarṇe 'bhagnaśabde sariddrute |
śabdabrahmaṇi niṣṇātaḥ paraṃ brahmādhigacchati || 38 ||

He attains the Supreme Brahman who is deeply merged into the Brahman that is sound (*śabdabrahman*), which is the Unstruck Sound (perceived) within the cavity of the ear (that is like) the uninterrupted sound of a fast flowing river. (38)

प्रणवादिसमुच्चारात्प्लुतान्ते शून्यभावनात् ।
शून्यया परया शक्त्या शून्यतामेति भैरवि ॥ ३९ ॥

praṇavādisamuccārāt plutānte śūnyabhāvanāt |
śūnyayā parayā śaktyā śūnyatām eti bhairavi || 39 ||

O Bhairavī, by uttering a *praṇava* or the like and by meditating on the void at the end of (its) prolated sound, (the yogi) attains Emptiness by means of the Void which is (Śiva's) supreme power. (39)

यस्य कस्यापि वर्णस्य पूर्वान्तावनुभावयेत् ।
शून्यया शून्यभूतोऽसौ शून्याकारः पुमान्भवेत् ॥ ४० ॥

yasya kasyāpi varṇasya pūrvāntāv anubhāvayet |
śūnyayā śūnyabhūto'sau śūnyākāraḥ pumān bhavet || 40 ||

One should experience (mindfully) the beginning and end of (the utterance of) any phoneme (*varṇa*).* Having become the Void by (the power of) the Void (there), the person (free of identification with embodied subjectivity becomes) the form of the Void. (40)

तन्त्र्यादिवाद्यशब्देषु दीर्घेषु क्रमसंस्थितेः ।
अनन्यचेताः प्रत्यन्ते परव्योमवपुर्भवेत् ॥ ४१ ॥

tantryādivādyaśabdeṣu dīrgheṣu kramasaṃsthiteḥ |
ananyacetāḥ pratyante paravyomavapur bhavet || 41 ||

He who (listens) with undivided attention to the prolonged sounds of stringed and other instruments of (the notes played) in their due order (to make music), when (their resonance) comes to an end, (his) body is the Supreme Void. (41)

पिण्डमन्त्रस्य सर्वस्य स्थूलवर्णक्रमेण तु ।
अर्धेन्दुबिन्दुनादान्तशून्योच्चाराद्भवेच्छिवः ॥ ४२ ॥

piṇḍamantrasya sarvasya sthūlavarṇakrameṇa tu |
ardhendubindunādāntaśūnyoccārād bhavec chivaḥ || 42 ||

By uttering the Void (at the end) of the Half Moon (*ardhacandra*), the Point (*bindu*), Sound (*nāda*), and the End (of Sound) of an entire syllabic (*piṇḍa*) mantra in accord with the sequence of (its) gross letters, (the yogi) becomes Śiva indeed. (42)

अबिन्दुमविसर्गं च अकारं जपतो महान् ।
उदेति देवि सहसा ज्ञानौघः परमेश्वरः ॥ ९० ॥

abindum avisargaṃ ca akāraṃ japato mahān |
udeti devi sahasā jñānaughaḥ parameśvaraḥ || 90 ||

O Goddess, by repeating the great letter 'A' without *bindu* (ṃ) and *visarga* (ḥ), the Supreme Lord, who is a torrent of knowledge, arises (spontaneously all) at once. (90)

वर्णस्य सविसर्गस्य विसर्गान्तं चितिं कुरु ।
निराधारेण चित्तेन स्पृशेद्ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥ ९१ ॥

varṇasya savisargasya visargāntaṃ citiṃ kuru |
nirādhāreṇa cittena spṛśed brahma sanātanam || 91 ||

Fix (the power of your) awareness (*citi*), with the mind (*citta*) free of (objective) support, within (and on the end of) *visarga* (Ḥ) of a phoneme with *visarga* (Ḥ) and make contact with the eternal Brahman. (91) (90)

संकोचं कर्णयोः कृत्वा ह्यधोद्वारे तथैव च ।
अनच्कमहलं ध्यायन्विशेद्ब्रह्म सनातनम् ॥ ११४ ॥

saṃkocaṃ karṇayoḥ kṛtvā hy adhodvāre tathaiva ca |
anackam ahalaṃ dhyāyan viśed brahma sanātanam || 114 ||

Having blocked the ears (with the thumbs) and so too the lower door (of the anus with the heel), meditating on (Unstruck Sound) devoid of vowels and consonants, (the yogi) enters the eternal Brahman. (114)

The Void

निजदेहे सर्वदिक्कं युगपद्भावयेद्वियत् ।
निर्विकल्पमनास्तस्य वियत्सर्वं प्रवर्तते ॥ ४३ ॥

nijadehe sarvadikkaṃ yugapad bhāvayed viyat |
nirvikalpamanās tasya viyat sarvaṃ pravartate || 43 ||

(The yogi) should meditate on the Void which is in all directions (at once) simultaneously within his own body, (his) mind free of thought. (Thus), everything becomes Void for him. (43)

पृष्ठशून्यं मूलशून्यं युगपद्भावयेच्च यः ।
शरीरनिरपेक्षिण्या शक्त्या शून्यमना भवेत् ॥ ४४ ॥

pṛṣṭhaśūnyaṃ mūlaśūnyaṃ yugapad bhāvayec ca yaḥ |
śarīranirapekṣiṇyā śaktyā śūnyamanā bhavet || 44 ||

He who simultaneously contemplates the Void above and the Void in the root (foundation below) becomes devoid of mind by the power (of consciousness) that is independent of the body. (44)

पृष्ठशून्यं मूलशून्यं हृच्छून्यं भावयेत्स्थिरम् ।
युगपन्निर्विकल्पत्वान्निर्विकल्पोदयस्ततः ॥ ४५ ॥

pṛṣṭhaśūnyaṃ mūlaśūnyaṃ hṛcchūnyaṃ bhāvayet sthiram |
yugapan nirvikalpatvān nirvikalpodayas tataḥ || 45 ||

One should meditate firmly, simultaneously on the Void above, the Void in the root (foundation below) and the Void in the heart, thus, being free of thought, (the liberated state) free of thought dawns. (45)

विश्वमेतन्महादेवि शून्यभूतं विचिन्तयेत् ।
तत्रैव च मनो लीनं ततस्तल्लयभाजनम् ॥ ५८ ॥

viśvam etan mahādevi śūnyabhūtaṃ vicintayet |
tatraiva ca mano līnaṃ tatas tal layabhājanam || 58 ||

O Great Goddess! One should think that this universe is Void and that the mind is dissolved away just there itself. Thus, that is the vessel of merger. (58) (57)

घटादिभाजने दृष्टिं भित्तीस्त्यक्ता विनिक्षिपेत् ।
तल्लयं तत्क्षणाद्गत्वा तल्लयात्तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ ५९ ॥

ghaṭādibhājane dṛṣṭiṃ bhittīs tyaktvā vinikṣipet |
tallayaṃ tatkṣaṇād gatvā tallayāt tanmayo bhavet || 59 ||

One should cast (one's) gaze into (the empty space of) a jar, for example, (or any other) vessel, having set aside (its) enclosing surfaces. Having dissolved away into it in that very moment into it, one becomes of that nature by virtue of that merger. (59) (58)

निर्वृक्षगिरिभित्त्यादिदेशे दृष्टिं विनिक्षिपेत् ।
विलीने मानसे भावे वृत्तिक्षीणः प्रजायते ॥ ६० ॥

nirvṛkṣagiribhittyādideśe dṛṣṭiṃ vinikṣipet |
vilīne mānase bhāve vṛttikṣīṇaḥ prajāyate || 60 ||

One should cast (one's) gaze on (an open stretch of) land devoid of trees, on mountains, walls and the like. When the mind's existence is (thus) in a state of merger (and has dissolved away), one becomes free of the fluctuations (of thought). (60) (59)

क्वचिद्वस्तुनि विन्यस्य शनैर्दृष्टिं निवर्तयेत् ।
तज्ज्ञानं चित्तसहितं देवि शून्यालयो भवेत् ॥ १२० ॥

kvacid vastuni vinyasya śanair dṛṣṭiṃ nivartayet |
tajjñānaṃ cittasahitaṃ devi śūnyālayo bhavet || 120 ||

Having placed the gaze somewhere (on some) object, slowly withdraw (it), along with the mind and the perception of it. (Then), O Goddess, one becomes the abode of the Void. (120) (118)

वस्त्वन्तरे वेद्यमाने शनैर्वस्तुषु शून्यता ।
तामेव मनसा ध्यात्वा विदितोऽपि प्रशाम्यति ॥ १२२ ॥

vastvantare vedyamāne śanair vastuṣu śūnyatā |
tām eva manasā dhyātvā vidito'pi praśāmyati || 122 ||

(After an object has been perceived), when (the pure consciousness) within an object is being perceived, gradually the emptiness (of pure consciousness is experienced) within (all other) things (as the emptiness of their absence). Having contemplated that (emptiness) itself with the mind (free of thought), one becomes tranquil, even if (the object) is (still) perceived. (122) (120)

The Universe

एवमेव जगत्सर्वं दग्धं ध्यात्वा विकल्पतः ।
अनन्यचेतसः पुंसः पुंभावः परमो भवेत् ॥ ५३ ॥

evam eva jagat sarvaṃ dagdhaṃ dhyātvā vikalpataḥ |
ananyacetasaḥ puṃsaḥ puṃbhāvaḥ paramo bhavet || 53 ||

Having meditated in this same way by imagining that the entire universe has been burnt away, a person whose mind is undistracted possesses the soul's supreme state. (53) (52)

भुवनाध्वादिरूपेण चिन्तयेत्क्रमशोऽखिलम् ।
स्थूलसूक्ष्मपरस्थित्या यावदन्ते मनोलयः ॥ ५६ ॥

bhuvanādhvādirūpeṇa cintayet kramaśo'khilam |
sthūlasūkṣmaparasthityā yāvad ante manolayaḥ || 56 ||

One should think successively of everything in the form of the path (*adhvan*) of the worlds (*bhuvana*) and the rest (of the paths), in (their) gross, subtle and supreme condition until, in the end, the mind dissolves away. (56) (55)

अस्य सर्वस्य विश्वस्य पर्यन्तेषु समन्ततः ।
अध्वप्रक्रियया तत्त्वं शैवं ध्यात्वा महोदयः ॥ ५७ ॥

asya sarvasya viśvasya paryanteṣu samantataḥ |
adhvaprakriyayā tattvaṃ śaivaṃ dhyātvā mahodayaḥ || 57 ||

Having meditated on the true nature (*tattva*) of all this universe as Śiva (who is within all things) right up to the very last ones, all around (in every way) (*samantataḥ*) by (applying) the procedure of the (six) Paths, (there comes about) the Great Awakening (*mahodaya*)! (57) (56)

माया विमोहिनी नाम कलायाः कलनं स्थितम् ।
इत्यादिधर्मं तत्त्वानां कलयन्न पृथग्भवेत् ॥ ९५ ॥

māyā vimohinī nāma kalāyāḥ kalanaṃ sthitam |
ityādidharmaṃ tattvānāṃ kalayan nā pṛthag bhavet || 95 ||

Māyā is deluding. The operation (*kalana*) of the Force (of limited agency) (*kalā*) (and the other *kañcukas*) goes on (functioning)—discerning (*kalayan*) this and the other properties of the reality principles (*tattva*) (with detachment) the individual soul (*nā*) is separated (from them). (95) (94)

The Body

तनूदेशे शून्यतैव क्षणमात्रं विभावयेत् ।
निर्विकल्पं निर्विकल्पो निर्विकल्पस्वरूपभाक् ॥ ४६ ॥

tanūdeśe śūnyataiva kṣaṇamātraṃ vibhāvayet |
nirvikalpaṃ nirvikalpo nirvikalpasvarūpabhāk || 46 ||

(If the state) free of thought (*nirvikalpa*), which is nothing but the emptiness within the location of the body, contemplates (the mind made) free of thought (*nirvikalpam*), for just a moment, (the one who is thus free of thought) possesses the nature of (that reality) free of thought. (46) (45)

सर्वं देहगतं द्रव्यं वियद्व्याप्तं मृगेक्षणे ।
विभावयेत्ततस्तस्य भावना सा स्थिरा भवेत् ॥ ४७ ॥

sarvaṃ dehagataṃ dravyaṃ viyadvyāptaṃ mṛgekṣaṇe |
vibhāvayet tatas tasya bhāvanā sā sthirā bhavet || 47 ||

O gazelle-eyed one! One should reflect (*vibhāvayet*) that all the (organic) substance in the body is pervaded by the Void; then one's contemplation (*bhāvanā*) (of the Void) should be firm. (47) (46)

देहान्तरे त्वग्विभागं भित्तिभूतं विचिन्तयेत् ।
न किञ्चिदन्तरे तस्य ध्यायन्नध्येयभाग्भवेत् ॥ ४८ ॥

dehāntare tvagvibhāgaṃ bhittibhūtaṃ vicintayet |
na kiñcid antare tasya dhyāyan adhyeyabhāg bhavet || 48 ||

One should think that the part which is the skin within the body is (an encompassing) wall, within which there is nothing at all. Meditating (in this way), (the yogi) participates in what cannot be an object of meditation. (48) (47)

कालाग्निना कालपदादुत्थितेन स्वकं पुरम् ।
प्लुष्टं विचिन्तयेदन्ते शान्ताभासस्तदा भवेत् ॥ ५२ ॥

kālāgninā kālapadād utthitena svakaṃ puram |
pluṣṭaṃ vicintayed ante śāntābhāsas tadā bhavet || 52 ||

(The yogi) should think that his own body has been burnt (to ashes) by the Fire of Time that has arisen from the (toe of the right foot, which is) the abode of (the Fire of) Time. Then, in the end, the Tranquil One manifests. (52) (51)

स्वदेहे जगतो वापि सूक्ष्मसूक्ष्मतराणि च ।
तत्त्वानि यानि निलयं ध्यात्वान्ते व्यज्यते परा ॥ ५४ ॥

svadehe jagato vā 'pi sūkṣmasūkṣmatarāṇi ca |
tattvāni yāni nilayaṃ dhyātvānte vyajyate parā || 54 ||

Having meditated on the merger of the subtle and (then progressively) most subtle principles (back into one another) that are within one's own body or also of the universe, in the end (the Goddess) Parā is revealed. (54)

सर्वं देहं चिन्मयं हि जगद्वा परिभावयेत् ।
युगपन्निर्विकल्पेन मनसा परमोदयः ॥ ६३ ॥

sarvaṃ dehaṃ cinmayaṃ hi jagad vā paribhāvayet |
yugapan nirvikalpena manasā paramodayaḥ || 63 ||

One should reflect all at once (simultaneously) with the mind free of thought that all the body or the universe is just (*hi*) made of consciousness; (thus the yogi attains) the supreme Awakening! (63) (62)

सर्वं जगत्स्वदेहं वा स्वानन्दभरितं स्मरेत् ।
युगपन्स्वामृतेनैव परानन्दमयो भवेत् ॥ ६५ ॥

sarvaṃ jagat svadehaṃ vā svānandabharitaṃ smaret |
yugapan svāmṛtenaiva parānandamayo bhavet || 65 ||

(The yogi) should recollect that the whole universe or his own body is filled all at once (simultaneously) with his own (innate) bliss. (Then), by the nectar of his own (innate nature) alone, he becomes supreme bliss. (65) (63)

किञ्चिदङ्गं विभिद्यादौ तीक्ष्णसूच्यादिना ततः ।
तत्रैव चेतनां युक्त्वा भैरवे निर्मला गतिः ॥ ९३ ॥

kiñcid aṅgaṃ vibhidyādau tīkṣṇasūcyādinā tataḥ |
tatraiva cetanāṃ yuktvā bhairave nirmalā gatiḥ || 93 ||

Having first pierced some limb (of the body) with a sharp needle or the like and then focused attention just there, (on the painful sensation), (one attains) the pure state within Bhairava. (93) (92)

विहाय निजदेहास्थां सर्वत्रास्मीति भावयन् ।
दृढेन मनसा दृष्ट्या नान्येक्षिण्या सुखी भवेत् ॥ १०४ ॥

vihāya nijadehāsthāṃ sarvatrāsmīti bhāvayan |
dṛḍhena manasā dṛṣṭyā nānyekṣiṇyā sukhī bhavet || 104 ||

After abandoning (all) regard (*āsthā*) for his own body, reflecting (*bhāvayan*) that "I am everywhere" with a firm mind and undistracted vision, (the yogi) is blissful. (104)

स्ववदन्यशरीरेऽपि संवित्तिमनुभावयेत् ।
अपेक्षां स्वशरीरस्य त्यक्त्वा व्यापी दिनैर्भवेत् ॥ १०७ ॥

svavad anyaśarīre'pi saṃvittim anubhāvayet |
apekṣāṃ svaśarīrasya tyaktvā vyāpī dinair bhavet || 107 ||

One should experience (*anubhāvayet*) the consciousness in someone else's body also as (one does within) one's own. Giving up concern for one's own body, one becomes (all) pervading within days. (107) (106)

The Heart and the Centre

हृद्याकाशे निलीनाक्षः पद्मसंपुटमध्यगः ।
अनन्यचेताः सुभगे परं सौभाग्यमाप्नुयात् ॥ ४९ ॥

hṛdyākāśe nilīnākṣaḥ padmasaṃpuṭamadhyagaḥ |
ananyacetāḥ subhage paraṃ saubhāgyam āpnuyāt || 49 ||

O Blessed One, (the yogi) whose senses have merged into the space within the Heart and (abides there) with an undistracted mind in the centre between the two halves of the lotus, attains supreme good fortune. (49)

उभयोर्भावयोर्ज्ञाने ध्यात्वा मध्यं समाश्रयेत् ।
युगपच्च द्वयं त्यक्त्वा मध्ये तत्त्वं प्रकाशते ॥ ६१ ॥

ubhayor bhāvayor jñāne dhyātvā madhyaṃ samāśrayet |
yugapac ca dvayaṃ tyaktvā madhye tattvaṃ prakāśate || 61 ||

When perceiving two entities, having meditated (on the emptiness) that is the centre between both of them, (the yogi) should rest (there). And (then), having abandoned the two simultaneously (at once), Reality shines (there) in the centre. (61) (60)

भावे न्यक्ते निरुद्धा चित् नैव भावान्तरं व्रजेत् ।
तदा तन्मध्यभावेन विकसत्यति भावना ॥ ६२ ॥

bhāve tyakte niruddhā cit naiva bhāvāntaraṃ vrajet |
tadā tanmadhyabhāvena vikasaty atibhāvanā || 62 ||

When one thing has been concealed (*tyakte*) (or abandoned), and consciousness has been (firmly) checked, it should not move on to something (*bhāva*) else. Then meditation (*bhāvanā*) blossoms forth intensely (*ati*) by virtue of (the emptiness of) the state (free of thought) in the centre (between) them (*tanmadhyabhāvena*). (62) (61)

The Experience of Pleasure

वह्नेर्विषस्य मध्ये तु चित्तं सुखमयं क्षिपेत् ।
केवलं वायुपूर्णं वा स्मरानन्देन युज्यते ॥ ६८ ॥

vahner viṣasya madhye tu cittaṃ sukhamayaṃ kṣipet |
kevalaṃ vāyupūrṇaṃ vā smarānandena yujyate || 68 ||

(When making love), one should place one's mind, made of bliss, in the middle (between the) 'Fire' (of the arousal of passion at the beginning) and the 'Poison' (of the pervasive consciousness of its appeasement at the end), or else filled only with the vital breath, (the mind) should be united with the bliss of passion (*smarānanda*) (which is the bliss of consciousness generated by the union of Śiva and Śakti). (68)

शक्तिसंगमसंक्षुब्धशक्त्यावेशावसानिकम् ।
यत्सुखं ब्रह्मतत्त्वस्य तत्सुखं स्वाक्यमुच्यते ॥ ६९ ॥

śaktisaṃgamasaṃkṣubdhaśaktyāveśāvasānikam |
yat sukhaṃ brahmatattvasya tat sukhaṃ svākyam ucyate || 69 ||

The bliss (*sukha*) that culminates (during orgasm) with penetration into power (*śakti*) well aroused by (sexual) union with a *śakti* is that of the reality of the Brahman which is said to be one's own (inherent) bliss. (69) (68)

लेहनामन्थनाकोटैः स्त्रीसुखस्य भरात्स्मृतेः ।
शक्त्यभावेऽपि देवेशि भवेदानन्दसंप्लवः ॥ ७० ॥

lehanāmanthanākoṭaiḥ strīsukhasya bharāt smṛteḥ |
śaktyabhāve'pi deveśi bhaved ānandasaṃplavaḥ || 70 ||

O goddess of the gods, even in the absence of a Śakti there is a flood of bliss by filling the memory with the joy (of sex, with a) woman, (had) by licking, churning, squeezing and the like. (70) (69)

आनन्दे महति प्राप्ते दृष्टे वा बान्धवे चिरात् ।
आनन्दमुद्गतं ध्यात्वा तल्लयस्तन्मना भवेत् ॥ ७१ ॥

ānande mahati prāpte dṛṣṭe vā bāndhave cirāt
ānandam udgataṃ dhyātvā tallayas tanmayo bhavet || 71 ||

When there is occasion for great bliss (such as when making love), or when seeing a (dear) relative (or friend) after a long time, having meditated on the bliss that arises (just then); (he, whose mind) is of that nature, dissolves into it. (71) (70)

जग्धिपानकृतोल्लासरसानन्दविजृम्भणात् ।
भावयेद्रिरितावस्थां महानन्दस्ततो भवेत् ॥ ७२ ॥

jagdhipānakṛtollāsarasānandavijṛmbhaṇāt |
bhāvayed bharitāvasthāṃ mahānandas tato bhavet || 72 ||

(The yogi) should contemplate (*bhāvayed*) the state (of spiritual) plenitude (he experiences brought about) by the unfolding of the joy, which is the savor (of the aesthetic delight) of the outpouring (of consciousness) brought about by eating and drinking. From that, there is great bliss. (72) (71)

गीतादिविषयास्वादासमसौख्यैकतात्मनः ।
योगिनस्तन्मयत्वेन मनोरूढेस्तदात्मता ॥ ७३ ॥

gītādiviṣayāsvādāsamasaukhyaikatātmanaḥ |
yoginas tanmayatvena manorūḍhes tadātmatā || 73 ||

The yogi who (experiences) the oneness of the unparalleled joy of savoring singing and other such (beautiful) objects (of sense, his) mind fixed (and well concentrated on that), becomes of that same (blissful) nature (as the Brahman) by identifying with it (*tanmayatvena*). (73) (72)

यत्र यत्र मनस्तुष्टिर्मनस्तत्रैव धारयेत् ।
तत्र तत्र परानन्दस्वरूपं संप्रवर्तते ॥ ७४ ॥

yatra yatra manas tuṣṭir manas tatraiva dhārayet |
tatra tatra parānandasvarūpaṃ saṃpravartate || 74 ||

One should sustain (*dhārayet*) (one's) attention wherever the mind is satisfied. It is there that the inherent nature of Supreme Bliss arises. (74) (73)

झगितीच्छां समुत्पन्नामवलोक्य शमं नयेत् ।
यत एव समुद्भूता ततस्तत्रैव लीयते ॥ ९६ ॥

jhagitīcchāṃ samutpannām avalokya śamaṃ nayet |
yata eva samudbhūtā tatas tatraiva līyate || 96 ||

Having observed that a desire (has just) arisen, it should be put to rest immediately. Thus, it dissolves away there itself, from whence it has come forth. (96) (95)

Light and Darkness

धामान्तः क्षोभसंभूतसूक्ष्माग्नितिलकाकृतिम् ।
बिन्दुं शिखान्ते हृदये लयान्ते ध्यायतो लयः ॥ ३७ ॥

dhāmāntaḥkṣobhasaṃbhūtasūkṣmāgnitilakākṛtim |
binduṃ śikhānte hṛdaye layānte dhyāyato layaḥ || 37 ||

A Point (of light) in the form of a subtle line (*tilaka*) of fire (between the eyebrows) arises by the inner agitation of (the eyeballs,) the abode (*dhāman*) (of sight), when it has dissolved away whilst meditating (on it) (within the upper End of the Twelve-finger Space) in the extremity of the topknot and within the heart, (the mind) dissolves away. (37)

तेजसा सूर्यदीपादेराकाशे शवलीकृते ।
दृष्टिर्निवेश्या तत्रैव स्वात्मरूपं प्रकाशते ॥ ७६ ॥

tejasā sūryadīpāder ākāśe śavalīkṛte |
dṛṣṭir niveśyā tatraiva svātmarūpaṃ prakāśate || 76 ||

One should direct one's gaze into the sky (or empty space) variegated by the light of the sun,lamp or the like. There itself one's own essential nature manifests. (76)

एवमेव दुर्निशायां कृष्णपक्षागमे चिरम् ।
तैमिरं भावयन् रूपं भैरवं रूपमेष्यति ॥ ८७ ॥

evam eva durniśāyāṃ kṛṣṇapakṣāgame ciram |
taimiraṃ bhāvayan rūpaṃ bhairavaṃ rūpam eṣyati || 87 ||

In very the same way, (the yogi) engaged in contemplating for a long time the (awesome) dark form (of the sky) on a dark (stormy) night during the dark lunar fortnight, (especially when there is no moon), attains Bhairava's nature. (87) (86)

एवमेव निमील्यादौ नेत्रे कृष्णाभमग्रतः ।
प्रसार्य भैरवं रूपं भावयंस्तन्मयो भवेत् ॥ ८८ ॥

evam eva nimīlyādau netre kṛṣṇābham agrataḥ |
prasārya bhairavaṃ rūpaṃ bhāvayaṃs tanmayo bhavet || 88 ||

In the very same way, initially closing the eyes (and meditating on) the darkness in front (and then opening them), extending out, contemplating *(bhāvayan)* (that dark) form of Bhairava, one becomes of that same nature. *(88) (87)*

Sleep

पीनां च दुर्बलां शक्तिं ध्यात्वा द्वादशगोचरे।
प्रविश्य हृदये ध्यायन्मुक्तः स्वातन्त्र्यमाप्नुयात् ॥ ५५ ॥

pīnāṃ ca durbalāṃ śaktiṃ dhyātvā dvādaśagocare |
praviśya hṛdaye dhyāyan svapnasvātantryam āpnuyāt || 55 ||

Having meditated on the energy (of the breath) fat (with its natural sound) as well as weak (and lengthy) in the region of the twelve (finger space then), once entered into the heart (when falling asleep) whilst engaged (in this) meditation, attains mastery (over his dreams). (55) (54)

अनागतायां निद्रायां प्रणष्टे बाह्यगोचरे।
सावस्था मनसा गम्या परा देवी प्रकाशते ॥ ७५ ॥

anāgatāyāṃ nidrāyāṃ praṇaṣṭe bāhyagocare |
sāvasthā manasā gamyā parā devī prakāśate || 75 ||

The state that manifests, which should be grasped by the (attentive) mind when, (as one falls asleep), the external field (of awareness) has disappeared (but) sleep has not yet come, is the Goddess Parā. (75) (74)

किंचिज्ज्ञातं द्वैतदायि बाह्यालोकस्तमः पुनः।
विश्वादि भैरवं रूपं ज्ञात्वानन्तप्रकाशभृत् ॥ ८६ ॥

kiṃcij jñātaṃ dvaitadāyi bāhyālokas tamaḥ punaḥ |
viśvādi bhairavaṃ rūpaṃ jñātvānantaprakāśabhṛt || 86 ||

(The yogi) possesses infinite Light once known Bhairava's nature as the waking and other (states), namely, (waking, in which only) something is known that generates duality, (dreaming, in which) the light (shines that illumines the mental traces of) the outer (world) and, again, (deep sleep, which is) darkness. (86) (85)

Practice with the body

कुहनेन प्रयोगेन सद्य एव मृगेक्षणे।
समुदेति महानन्दो येन तत्त्वं प्रकाशते ॥ ६६ ॥

kuhanena prayogena sadya eva mṛgekṣaṇe |
samudeti mahānando yena tattvaṃ prakāśate || 66 ||

O gazelle-eyed (goddess), by applying the trick (of tickling under the armpits), great bliss arises all of a sudden (*sadyas*) due to which (the supreme) reality manifests. (66) (65)

मृद्वासने स्फिजैकेन हस्तपादौ निराश्रयम् ।
निधाय तत्प्रसङ्गेन परा पूर्णा मतिर्भवेत् ॥ ७८ ॥

mṛdvāsane sphijaikena hastapādau nirāśraye |
vidhāya tatprasaṅgena parā pūrṇā matir bhavet || 78 ||

(The yogi should sit) on a soft seat, on one buttock, keeping (his) hands and feet without support. (His) intellect (*mati*) becomes supreme and complete in adherence with that. (78) (77)

उपविश्यासने सम्यक् बाहू कृत्वार्धकुञ्चितौ ।
कक्षव्योम्नि मनः कुर्वन् शममायाति तल्लयात् ॥ ७९ ॥

upaviśyāsane samyag bāhū kṛtvārdhakuñcitau |
kakṣavyomni manaḥ kurvan śamam āyāti tallayāt || 79 ||

Having sat on a seat and half bent the arms properly (as required), fixing the mind on the space under the armpits, by merging into that, peace comes. (79)

मध्यजिह्वे स्फारितास्ये मध्ये निक्षिप्य चेतनाम् ।
होच्चारं मनसा कुर्वंस्ततः शान्ते प्रलीयते ॥ ८१ ॥

madhyajihve sphāritāsye madhye nikṣipya cetanām |
hoccāraṃ manasā kurvaṃs tataḥ śānte pralīyate || 81 ||

The tongue (turned up) into the centre (of the nasal cavity), having cast (one's) attention (there) in the middle of the mouth, gapping wide open whilst uttering (the letter) H mentally, (the breath) then dissolves away into the Tranquil One. (81)

आसने शयने स्थित्वा निराधारं विभावयन्
स्वदेहं मनसि क्षीणे क्षणात् क्षीणाशयो भवेत् ॥ ८२ ॥

āsane śayane sthitvā nirādhāraṃ vibhāvayan |
svadehaṃ manasi kṣīṇe kṣaṇāt kṣīṇāśayo bhavet || 82 ||

(Either sitting) on a seat or (lying) on a bed, meditating (*vibhāvayan*) on one's own body as being without support, when the mind ceases, within a moment (the yogi) is free of (all his binding) dispositions (*āśaya*). (82)

चलासने स्थितस्याथ शनैर्वा देहचालनात् ।
प्रशान्ते मानसे भावे देवि दिव्यौघमाप्नुयात् ॥ ८३ ॥

calāsane sthitasyātha śanair vā dehacālanāt |
praśānte mānase bhāve devi divyaugham āpnuyāt || 83 ||

O Goddess, whether seated on a moving seat (of a vehicle) or by moving (one's own) body slowly when the mind is in a tranquil state, one attains the Divine Current (*divyaugha*) (of the assembly of divine worlds and supreme yogis). (83)

यस्य कस्येन्द्रियस्यापि व्याघाताच्च निरोधतः
प्रविष्टस्याद्वये शून्ये तत्रैवात्मा प्रकाशते ॥ ८९ ॥

yasya kasyendriyasyāpi vyāghātāc ca nirodhataḥ
praviṣṭasyādvaye śūnye tatraivātmā prakāśate || 89 ||

(By blocking the function) of any one of the senses by a blow (from an external object) and by blocking (it voluntarily by striking oneself), the Self (*ātman*) (of the yogi) who has (thereby) entered the non-dual Void manifests there. (89) (88)

भ्रान्त्वा भ्रान्त्वा शरीरेण त्वरितं भुवि पातनात् ।
क्षोभशक्तिविरामेण परा संजायते दशा ॥ १११ ॥

bhrāntvā bhrāntvā śarīreṇa tvaritaṃ bhuvi pātanāt |
kṣobhaśaktivirāmeṇa parā saṃjāyate daśā || 111 ||

After wandering about (for a long time) repeatedly, by falling quickly onto the ground with the body (thoroughly exhausted) and relaxing the power (that) agitates (the wayfarer's body), the supreme state arises. (111) (110)

Gazing

स्थूलरूपस्य भावस्य स्तब्धां दृष्टिं निपात्य च ।
अचिरेण निराधारं मनः कृत्वा शिवं व्रजेत् ॥ ८० ॥

sthūlarūpasya bhāvasya stabdhāṃ dṛṣṭiṃ nipātya ca |
acireṇa nirādhāraṃ manaḥ kṛtvā śivaṃ vrajet || 80 ||

Casting a fixed gaze on something with a gross form, having made the mind free of (all) support, one quickly attains Śiva. (80)

आकाशं विमलं पश्यन् कृत्वा दृष्टिं निरन्तराम् ।
स्तब्धात्मा तत्क्षणाद्देवि भैरवं वपुराप्नुयात् ॥ ८४ ॥

ākāśaṃ vimalaṃ paśyan kṛtvā dṛṣṭiṃ nirantarām |
stabdhātmā tatkṣaṇād devi bhairavaṃ vapur āpnuyāt || 84 ||

Beholding a clear (cloudless) sky, having made (his) gaze (constant) without a break, he (whose body, senses and mind are perfectly) immobile attains, O Goddess, that very instant, Bhairava's nature. (84)

लीनं मूर्ध्नि वियत्सर्वं भैरवत्वेन भावयेत् ।
तत्सर्वं भैरवाकारतेजस्तत्त्वं समाविशेत् ॥ ८५ ॥

līnaṃ mūrdhni viyat sarvaṃ bhairavatvena bhāvayet |
tat sarvaṃ bhairavākāratejastattvaṃ samāviśet || 85 ||

(The yogi) should imagine (*bhāvayet*) that the entire (expanse of the) sky is merged within (his) head as Bhairava's state. (Then he and) all that (exists) penetrates (and is absorbed) into the reality (which is) the radiant energy (*tejas*) of Bhairava's form. (85) (84)

संप्रदायमिमं देवि शृणु सम्यग्वदाम्यहम् ।
कैवल्यं जायते सद्यो नेत्रयोः स्तब्धमात्रयोः ॥ ११३ ॥

saṃpradāyam imaṃ devi śṛṇu samyag vadāmy aham |
kaivalyaṃ jāyate sadyo netrayoḥ stabdhamātrayoḥ || 113 ||

O Goddess, listen to this, the traditional teaching (*saṃpradāya*). I shall tell (you what it is) properly. The liberated state (*kaivalya*) arises immediately, just when the eyes are fixed without blinking. (113) (112)

वस्तुषु समर्यमाणेषु दृष्टे देशे मनस्त्यजेत् ।
स्वशरीरं निराधारं कृत्वा प्रसरति प्रभुः ॥ ११९ ॥

vastuṣu smaryamāṇeṣu dṛṣṭe deśe manas tyajet |
svaśarīraṃ nirādhāraṃ kṛtvā prasarati prabhuḥ || 119 ||

(Remembering the past,) abandon the mind in a place (previously) seen amongst the things recalled. Having freed its own body of support (in this way), the Lord spreads forth (and reveals Himself). (119) (117)

क्वचिद्वस्तुनि विन्यस्य शनैर्दृष्टिं निवर्तयेत् ।
तज्ज्ञानं चित्तसहितं देवि शून्यालयो भवेत् ॥ १२० ॥

kvacid vastuni vinyasya śanair dṛṣṭiṃ nivartayet |
tajjñānaṃ cittasahitaṃ devi śūnyālayo bhavet || 120 ||

Having placed the gaze somewhere (on some) object, slowly withdraw (it), along with the mind and the perception of it. (Then), O Goddess, one becomes the abode of the Void. (120) (118)

Equanimity

चिद्धर्मा सर्वदेहेषु विशेषो नास्ति कुत्रचित् ।
अतश्च तन्मयं सर्वं भावयन्भवजिज्जनः ॥ १०० ॥

ciddharmā sarvadeheṣu viśeṣo nāsti kutracit |
ataś ca tanmayaṃ sarvaṃ bhāvayan bhavajij janaḥ || 100 ||

The one, whose nature (*dharma*) is consciousness, is present in all bodies; there is no difference anywhere. Thus, a person engaged in contemplating (*bhāvayan*) everything as being of that nature conquers phenomenal existence. (100) (99)

न चित्तं निक्षिपेद्दुःखे न सुखे वा परिक्षिपेत् ।
भैरवि ज्ञायतां मध्ये किं तत्त्वमवशिष्यते ॥ १०३ ॥

na cittaṃ nikṣiped duḥkhe na sukhe vā parikṣipet |
bhairavi jñāyatāṃ madhye kiṃ tattvam avaśiṣyate || 103 ||

Cast not the mind into suffering nor into pleasure. Know, O Bhairavī! what (that) reality is that remains in the middle (state between them). (103)

किंचिज्ज्ञैर्या स्मृता शुद्धिः साऽशुद्धिः शंभुदर्शने ।
न शुचिर्ह्यशुचिस्तस्मान्निर्विकल्पः सुखी भवेत् ॥ १२३ ॥

kiṃcijjñair yā smṛtā śuddhiḥ sā'śuddhiḥ śaṃbhudarśane |
na śucir hy aśucis tasmān nirvikalpaḥ sukhī bhavet || 123 ||

That, which (people) with little understanding consider to be purity (*śuddhi*), is not purity according to the Śaiva teachings. There is neither clean (*śuci*) nor unclean. Therefore, one who is free of (such dichotomizing) notions is happy (and blissful). (123) (121)

सर्वत्र भैरवो भावः सामान्येष्वपि गोचरः ।
न च तद्व्यतिरेकेण परोऽस्तीत्यद्वया गतिः ॥ १२४ ॥

sarvatra bhairavo bhāvaḥ sāmānyeṣv api gocaraḥ |
na ca tadvyatirekeṇa paro'stīty advayā gatiḥ || 124 ||

Bhairava's Being is everywhere. It is in the field (of the understanding) of common folk also. (He, who knows that) nothing else exists apart from Him, (attains) the non-dual state. (124) (122)

समः शत्रौ च मित्रे च समो मानावमानयोः ।
ब्रह्मणः परिपूर्णत्वादिति ज्ञात्वा सुखी भवेत् ॥ १२५ ॥

samaḥ śatrau ca mitre ca samo mānāvamānayoḥ |
brahmaṇaḥ paripūrṇatvād iti jñātvā sukhī bhavet || 125 ||

(One who is) equal towards friend and foe (alike), the same when honored or insulted, because the Brahman (which is his true nature is) full (and perfect), having known this, is (always) happy. (125) (123)

न द्वेषं भावयेत्क्वापि न रागं भावयेत्क्वचित् ।
रागद्वेषविनिर्मुक्तौ मध्ये ब्रह्म प्रसर्पति ॥ १२६ ॥

na dveṣaṃ bhāvayet kvāpi na rāgaṃ bhāvayet kvacit |
rāgadveṣavinirmuktau madhye brahma prasarpati || 126 ||

One should neither cultivate (*bhāvayet*) aversion nor attachment in any circumstance. The Brahman extends in the centre (in between these extremes), which is free of attachment and hatred. (126) (124)

यत्र यत्र मनो याति तत्तत्तेनैव तत्क्षणम् ।
परित्यज्यानवस्थित्या निस्तरङ्गस्ततो भवेत् ॥ १२९ ॥

yatra yatra mano yāti tat tat tenaiva tatkṣaṇam |
parityajyānavasthityā nistaraṅgas tato bhavet || 129 ||

Wherever the mind moves, having by that (very mind) at that (very) moment abandoned whatever (it moves to), it has no fixed place and so (left without support), one becomes free of (its) fluctuations. (129) (127)

Knowledge

यदा ममेच्छा नोत्पन्ना ज्ञानं वा कस्तदास्मि वै ।
तत्त्वतोऽहं तथा भूतस्तल्लीनस्तन्मना भवेत् ॥ ९७ ॥

yadā mamecchā notpannā jñānaṃ vā kas tadāsmi vai |
tattvato'haṃ tathābhūtas tallīnas tanmanā bhavet || 97 ||

(Reflecting:) "When my will or knowledge have not arisen, who am I then?—Indeed, I am as I truly am!" being such (i.e. consciousness and bliss), merged in that, he becomes one with that. (97)

इच्छायामथवा ज्ञाने जाते चित्तं निवेशयेत् ।
आत्मबुद्ध्यानन्यचेतास्ततस्तत्त्वार्थदर्शनम् ॥ ९८ ॥

icchāyām athavā jñāne jāte cittaṃ niveśayet |
ātmabuddhyānanyacetās tatas tattvārthadarśanam || 98 ||

(At the very instant) when a desire or perception has (just) arisen, (but is as yet without an object), one whose attention is not directed towards anything else, should place the mind (where it emerges, cultivating) the notion (*buddhi*) that (this is) the Self. (Thus, he) then (has) a vision of what truly exists (*tattvārtha*). (98) (97)

निर्मित्तं भवेज्ज्ञानं निराधारं भ्रमात्मकम् ।
तत्त्वतः कस्यचिन्नैतदेवंभावी शिवः प्रिये ॥ ९९ ॥

nirnimittaṃ bhavej jñānaṃ nirādhāraṃ bhramātmakam |
tattvataḥ kasyacin naitad evaṃbhāvī śivaḥ priye || 99 ||

(All) knowledge is without (outer, independent) cause, baseless and deceptive. In reality, this (knowledge) does not belong to anybody. One who abides in this way (with this attitude), O dear one, is Śiva. (99) (98)

घटादौ यच्च विज्ञानमिच्छाद्यं वा ममान्तरे ।
नैव सर्वगतं जातं भावयन्निति सर्वगः ॥ १०५ ॥

ghaṭādau yac ca vijñānam icchādyaṃ vā mamāntare |
naiva sarvagataṃ jātaṃ bhāvayan iti sarvagaḥ || 105 ||

"The perception present when (perceiving an outer object), such as a jar or the desire and the like is not (just) within me, it has become omnipresent." Meditating (*bhāvayan*) in this way, (the yogi) becomes omnipresent. (105) (104)

ग्राह्यग्राहकसंवित्तिः सामान्या सर्वदेहिनाम् ।
योगिनां तु विशेषोऽस्ति संबन्धे सावधानता ॥ १०६ ॥

grāhyagrāhakasaṃvittiḥ sāmānyā sarvadehinām |
yoginām tu viśeṣo'sti saṃbandhe sāvadhānatā || 106 ||

The perception of subject and object is common to all embodied beings. What distinguishes yogis (from the others is that they pay careful) attention to (their) relationship. (106) (105)

आधारेष्वथवाऽशक्त्याऽज्ञानाच्चित्तलयेन वा ॥
जातशक्तिसमावेशक्षोभान्ते भैरवं वपुः ॥ ११२ ॥

ādhāreṣv athavā'śaktyā'jñānāc cittalayena vā |
jātaśaktisamāveśakṣobhānte bhairavaṃ vapuḥ || 112 ||

Bhairava's body (manifests) at the end of the agitation caused by the penetration of the power (of consciousness) that arises due to the incapacity of the (senses to operate) in (their) foundations or else by the dissolving away of the mind (*cittalaya*) (and its paralysis) due to ignorance. (112) (111)

यदवेद्यं यदग्राह्यं यच्छून्यं यदभावगम् ।
तत्सर्वं भैरवं भाव्यं तदन्ते बोधसंभवः ॥ १२७ ॥

yad avedyaṃ yad agrāhyaṃ yac chūnyaṃ yad abhāvagam |
tat sarvaṃ bhairavaṃ bhāvyaṃ tadante bodhasaṃbhavaḥ || 127 ||

That which is not an object of knowledge, that cannot be grasped, that is Void and is present in the absence (of things) (*abhāva*), should all be contemplated (*bhāvya*) as Bhairava. (Finally) at the end (and culmination) of that (meditation, the realized yogi experiences) the birth of (awakened) consciousness. (127) (125)

अहं ममेदमित्यादिप्रतिपत्तिप्रसङ्गतः ।
निराधारे मनो याति तद्ध्यानप्रेरणाच्छमी ॥ १३१ ॥

ahaṃ mamedam ityādipratipattiprasaṅgataḥ |
nirādhāre mano yāti taddhyānapreraṇāc chamī || 131 ||

In the course of ascertainments such as "I am", "this is mine" and the like, the mind enters (a state of subjectivity) devoid of (objective) support. Impelled (and inspired) by that meditation, one becomes peaceful. (131) (129)

Intense Sensations and Emotions

कामक्रोधलोभमोहमदमात्सर्यगोचरे ।
बुद्धिं निस्तिमितां कृत्वा तत्तत्त्वमवशिष्यते ॥ १०१ ॥

kāmakrodhalobhamohamadamātsaryagocare |
buddhiṃ nistimitāṃ kṛtvā tat tattvam avaśiṣyate || 101 ||

Having halted (the agitation of) the mind (*buddhi*) when (sexual) desire, anger, greed, delusion, madness, and envy (are about to arise), what remains is that (one, supreme) reality (of consciousness that underlies it). (101) (100)

कूपादिके महागर्ते स्थित्वोपरि निरीक्षणात् ।
अविकल्पमतेः सम्यक् सद्यश्चित्तलयः स्फुटम् ॥ ११५ ॥

kūpādike mahāgarte sthitvopari nirīkṣaṇāt |
avikalpamateḥ samyak sadyaś cittalayaḥ sphuṭam || 115 ||

Standing on the edge (of a deep) well and the like, (or) a great abyss, by gazing (down into it), the mind of one whose mind is free of thoughts properly, immediately, and clearly dissolves away. (115) (113)

क्षुताद्यन्ते भये शोके गह्वरे वा रणाद्द्रुते ।
कुतूहले क्षुधाद्यन्ते ब्रह्मसत्तामयी दशा ॥ ११८ ॥

krodhādyante bhaye śoke gahvare vā raṇād drute |
kutūhale kṣudhādyante brahmasattā samīpagā || 118 ||

Just when anger begins and ends, when in fear, grieving, (facing a) deep pit, or fleeing from battle, when (intensely) curious, or when hunger starts or ends, the Being of the Brahman stands close at hand. (118) (116)

Where the Mind Goes

ईदृशेन क्रमेणैव यत्र कुत्रापि चिन्तना ।
शून्ये कुड्ये परे पात्रे स्वयं लीना वरप्रदा ॥ ३३ ॥

īdṛśena krameṇaiva yatra kutrāpi cintanā |
śūnye kuḍye pare pātre svayaṃ līnā varapradā || 33 ||

Wherever (one's attentive) thought (*cintanā*) (settles) by this same process, be it in an empty space, on a wall, (or) on a worthy disciple, it spontaneously dissolves away and (so) bestows the boon (of pure consciousness). (33)

कपालान्तर्मनो न्यस्य तिष्ठन्मीलितलोचनः ।
क्रमेण मनसो दार्ढ्यात् लक्षयेल्लक्ष्यमुत्तमम् ॥ ३४ ॥

kapālāntar mano nyasya tiṣṭhan mīlitalocanaḥ |
krameṇa manaso dārḍhyāt lakṣayel lakṣyam uttamam || 34 ||

Having placed the mind within (the space of the) skull, abiding (motionless) with the eyes closed, by the progressively (increasing) stability of the mind, one perceives the supreme goal. (34)

व्योमाकारं स्वामात्मानं ध्यायेद्दिग्भिरनावृतम् ।
निराश्रया चितिः शक्तिः स्वरूपं दर्शयेत्तदा ॥ ९२ ॥

vyomākāraṃ svām ātmānaṃ dhyāyed digbhir anāvṛtam |
nirāśrayā citiḥ śaktiḥ svarūpaṃ darśayet tadā || 92 ||

One should meditate on one's own self in the form of the sky, unconfined by the directions, then the power of consciousness, free of (all) support, shows (her) own nature. (92) (91)

चित्ताद्यन्तःकृतिर्नास्ति ममान्तर्भावयेदिति ।
विकल्पानामभावेन विकल्पैरुज्झितो भवेत् ॥ ९४ ॥

cittādyantaḥkṛtir nāsti mamāntar bhāvayed iti |
vikalpānām abhāvena vikalpair ujjhito bhavet || 94 ||

(The yogi) should reflect (*bhāvayet*) that "there is no inner (mental) organ within me, whether mind, (intellect or ego)." (Thus) because there are no thoughts (also), (the yogi) is devoid of them. (94) (93)

निराधारं मनः कृत्वा विकल्पान् न विकल्पयेत् ।
तदात्मपरमात्मत्वे भैरवो मृगलोचने ॥ १०८ ॥

nirādhāraṃ manaḥ kṛtvā vikalpān na vikalpayet |
tadātmaparamātmatve bhairavo mṛgalocane || 108 ||

Freeing the mind of (all) support, one should not conceive (any) thoughts. O gazelle-eyed one, then (the individual) self is (merged in) the Supreme Self and so is (recognized to be) Bhairava. (108) (107)

यत्र यत्र मनो याति बाह्ये वाभ्यन्तरेऽपि वा ।
तत्र तत्र शिवावस्था व्यापकत्वात्क्व यास्यति ॥ ११६ ॥

yatra yatra mano yāti bāhye vābhyantare'pi vā |
tatra tatra śivāvasthā vyāpakatvāt kva yāsyati || 116 ||

Wherever the mind goes, whether outside or within, Śiva's state is present there. (Śiva) pervades (everything), so where (else) could it go? (116) (114)

नित्ये निराश्रये शून्ये व्यापके कलनोज्झिते ।
बाह्याकाशे मनः कृत्वा निराकाशं समाविशेत् ॥ १२८ ॥

nitye nirāśraye śūnye vyāpake kalanojjhite |
bāhyākāśe manaḥ kṛtvā nirākāśaṃ samāviśet || 128 ||

Once the mind has been fixed on an external space, which is permanent, without support, empty, pervasive, and without a cause (*kalanojjhita*), it enters (and is absorbed into the transcendent) absence of space (which is continuous, uninterrupted consciousness). (128) (126)

The Magic Show

इन्द्रजालमयं विश्वं व्यस्तं वा चित्रकर्मवत् ।
भ्रमद्वा ध्यायतः सर्वं पश्यतश्च सुखोद्गमः ॥ १०२ ॥

indrajālamayaṃ viśvaṃ nyastaṃ vā citrakarmavat |
bhramad vā dhyāyataḥ sarvaṃ paśyataś ca sukhodgamaḥ || 102 ||

Contemplating the universe as a magic show, or as projected (*nyasta*) (onto a canvas) like (painting) a picture, or in (constant) motion: viewing everything (in this way, one experiences) the emergence of bliss. (102) (101)

अतत्त्वमिन्द्रजालाभमिदं सर्वमवस्थितम् ।
किं तत्त्वमिन्द्रजालस्य इति दार्ढ्याच्छमं व्रजेत् ॥ १३३ ॥

atattvam indrajālābham idaṃ sarvam avasthitam |
kiṃ tattvam indrajālasya iti dārḍhyāc chamaṃ vrajet || 133 ||

"All this (universe) is without reality, like a magic show (*indrajāla*), for what reality is there of a magic show?" By the firmness (of this conviction), one attains peace. (133) (131)

आत्मनो निर्विकारस्य क्व ज्ञानं क्व च वा क्रिया ।
ज्ञानायत्ता बहिर्भावा अतः शून्यमिदं जगत् ॥ १३४ ॥

ātmano nirvikārasya kva jñānaṃ kva ca vā kriyā |
jñānāyattā bahirbhāvā ataḥ śūnyam idaṃ jagat || 134 ||

How can the unchanging Self possess knowledge or action? (And yet all) external entities depend on perception (*jñāna*) (in order to be known). (Clearly), therefore, this universe is Void (of any existence of its own). (134) (132)

ज्ञानप्रकाशकं सर्वं सर्वेणात्मा प्रकाशकः ।
एकमेकस्वभावत्वात् ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं विभाव्यते ॥ १३७ ॥

jñānaprakāśakaṃ sarvaṃ sarveṇātmā prakāśakaḥ |
ekam ekasvabhāvatvāt jñānaṃ jñeyaṃ vibhāvyate || 137 ||

Everything (in this world) is illumined by knowledge and by virtue of all (things) the Self is the illuminator. Knowledge alone, as its nature is one, is perceived to be the object of knowledge. (137) (135)

The Supreme Lord

सर्वज्ञः सर्वकर्ता च व्यापकः परमेश्वरः ।
स एवाहं शैवधर्मा इति दाढ्र्याद्भवेच्छिवः ॥ १०९ ॥

sarvajñaḥ sarvakartā ca vyāpakaḥ parameśvaraḥ |
sa evāhaṃ śaivadharmā iti dārḍhyād bhavec chivaḥ || 109 ||

"The Supreme Lord is omniscient, does everything and is (all) pervading. I myself am He, who possesses Śiva's attributes." By the firmness (and stability of this conviction), one becomes Śiva. (109) (108)

जलस्येवोर्मयो वह्नेर्ज्वालाभङ्ग्यः प्रभा रवेः ॥
ममैव भैरवस्यैता विश्वभङ्ग्यो विभेदिताः ॥ ११० ॥

jalasyevormayo vahner jvālābhaṅgyaḥ prabhā raveḥ |
mamaiva bhairavasyaitā viśvabhaṅgyo vibheditāḥ || 110 ||

(Just as) waves are (those) of water itself (*eva*), flames of fire and rays of the sun, (in the same way) these cosmic waves of Bhairava, differentiated (from Him and one another) are my very own. (110) (109)

भक्त्युद्रेकाद्विरक्तस्य यादृशी जायते मतिः ॥
सा शक्तिः शांकरी नित्यं भावयेत्तां ततः शिवः ॥ १२१ ॥

bhaktyudrekād viraktasya yādṛśī jāyate matiḥ ||
sā śaktiḥ śāṃkarī nityaṃ bhāvayet tāṃ tataḥ Śivaḥ || 121 ||

The kind of intuitive insight (*mati*) that arises in one who is detached (from the world) by virtue of (his) intense devotion, is Śaṅkara's power. Contemplate (*bhāvayet*) her constantly (and) thus (become) Śiva. (121) (119)

नित्यो विभुर्निराधारो व्यापकश्चाखिलाधिपः ।
शब्दान् प्रतिक्षणं ध्यायन् कृतार्थोऽर्थानुरूपतः ॥ १३२ ॥

nityo vibhur nirādhāro vyāpakaś cākhilādhipaḥ |
śabdān pratikṣaṇaṃ dhyāyan kṛtārtho'rthānurūpataḥ || 132 ||

'Eternal', 'omnipresent', 'without support', 'all-pervading', and 'Lord of all'—meditating every moment on (these) words, one achieves the goal in accord with (their) meaning. (132) (130)

Concluding Verses

मानसं चेतना शक्तिरात्मा चेति चतुष्टयम् ।
यदा प्रिये परिक्षीणं तदा तद्भैरवं वपुः ॥ १३८ ॥

mānasaṃ cetanā śaktir ātmā ceti catuṣṭayam |
yadā priye parikṣīṇaṃ tadā tad bhairavaṃ vapuḥ || 138 ||

O Dear One, if the group of four, namely, (all that is) mental (*mānasa*), (intellectual) awareness (*cetanā*), the energy (of the vital breath) (*śakti*) and the (individual) self (*ātman*), wanes away completely, then that (which remains) is Bhairava's body (*vapus*). (138) (136)

निस्तरङ्गोपदेशानां शतमुक्तं समासतः ।
द्वादशाभ्यधिकं देवि यज्ज्ञात्वा ज्ञानविज्जनः ॥ १३९ ॥

nistaraṅgopadeśānāṃ śatam uktaṃ samāsataḥ |
dvādaśābhyadhikaṃ devi yaj jñātvā jñānavij janaḥ || 139 ||

O Goddess! I have revealed (these) one hundred and twelve teachings concerning (the state) free of the waves (of the fluctuations of thought) in brief, knowing which a person possesses the knowledge (that frees from bondage). (139) (137)

अत्र चैकतमे युक्तो जायते भैरवः स्वयम् ।
वाचा करोति कर्माणि शापानुग्रहकारकः ॥ १४० ॥

atra caikatame yukto jāyate bhairavaḥ svayam |
vācā karoti karmāṇi śāpānugrahakārakaḥ || 140 ||

He who applies (himself) here to any one of (these meditations) becomes Bhairava Himself. He curses and graces (others at will) and performs (all his) actions by (his) speech (alone). (140) (139) (138)

अजरामरतामेति सोऽणिमादिगुणान्वितः ।
योगिनीनां प्रियो देवि सर्वमेलापकाधिपः ॥ १४१ ॥
जीवन्नपि विमुक्तोऽसौ कुर्वन्नपि च चेष्टितम् ।

ajarāmaratām eti so'ṇimādiguṇānvitaḥ |
yoginīnāṃ priyo devi sarvamelāpakādhipaḥ || 141 ||
jīvan api vimukto'sau kurvan api ca ceṣṭitam |

O Goddess! (such a yogi) attains freedom from old age and death and is endowed with (all the yogi's) abilities (*guṇa*) beginning with the power to make himself small at will (*aṇimā*). He is the beloved of the Yoginīs and presides over all the gatherings (of Siddhas and Yoginīs). Although he lives, he is liberated and even though he (continues) to act (in his daily life, he is untainted). (141–142ab) (139–140ab)

श्रीदेवी उवाच
इदं यदि वपुर्देव परायाश्च महेश्वर ॥ १४२ ॥
एवमुक्तव्यवस्थायां जप्यते को जपश्च कः ।
ध्यायते को महानाथ पूज्यते कश्च तृप्यति ॥ १४३ ॥
हूयते कस्य वा होमो यागः कस्य च किं कथम् ।

śrīdevī uvāca
idaṃ yadi vapur deva parāyāś ca maheśvara || 142 ||
evamuktavyavasthāyāṃ japyate ko japaś ca kaḥ |
dhyāyate ko mahānātha pūjyate kaś ca tṛpyati || 143 ||
hūyate kasya vā homo yāgaḥ kasya ca kiṃ katham |

The venerable Goddess said:

O God! O Great Lord! If this is the nature (and body) (*vapus*) of (the Goddess) Parā, then in the state thus described, what (Mantra) is repeated, what is (that) repetition? Who meditates? O Great Lord, who is worshipped and gratified (by it)? (Who) offers oblation and whose is the offering? Whose is the sacrifice? What is it and how (is it offered)? (142cd-144ab) (140cd-142ab)

श्रीभैरव उवाच
एषात्र प्रक्रिया बाह्या स्थूलेष्वेवमृगेक्षणे ॥ १४४ ॥
भूयो भूयः परे भावे भावना भाव्यते हि या ।
जपः सोऽत्र स्वयं नादो मन्त्रात्मा जप्य ईदृशः ॥ १४५ ॥

śrībhairava uvāca
eṣātra prakriyā bāhyā sthūlety eva mṛgekṣaṇe || 144 ||
bhūyo bhūyaḥ pare bhāve bhāvanā bhāvyate hi yā |
japaḥ so'tra svayaṃ nādo mantrātmā japya īdṛśaḥ || 145 ||

O gazelle-eyed Goddess! This procedure (*prakriyā*) (of reciting Mantras and performing rituals) here, (in this scripture, is considered to be) external and gross only. That contemplation (*bhāvanā*) which is experienced (*bhāvyate*) (and takes place) repeatedly again and again in the supreme state is here (according to this scripture) the repeated recitation of Mantra (*japa*). It is the spontaneous Sound (of consciousness). Such is the nature of Mantra that should be repeatedly recited. (144cd-145) (142cd-143)

ध्यानं हि निश्चला बुद्धिर्निराकारा निराश्रया ।
न तु ध्यानं शरीराक्षिमुखहस्तादिकल्पना ॥ १४६ ॥

dhyānaṃ hi niścalā buddhir nirākārā nirāśrayā |
na tu dhyānaṃ śarīrākṣimukhahastādikalpanā || 146 ||

Meditation (*dhyana*) is indeed the immobile, formless and unsustained intellect. Meditation is certainly not imagining the face and hands etc. of the body (of a deity). (146) (144)

पूजा नाम न पुष्पाद्यैर्या मतिः क्रियते दृढा ।
निर्विकल्पे परे व्योम्नि सा पूजा ह्यादराल्लयः ॥ १४७ ॥

pūjā nāma na puṣpādyair yā matiḥ kriyate dṛḍhā |
nirvikalpe pare vyomni sā pūjā hy ādarāl layaḥ || 147 ||

(Real) worship (*pūjā*) is not (performed by just offering) flowers and the like. It is that which makes the intuitive mind (*mati*) firm (and stable) in the Supreme Sky (of transcendental consciousness), free of thought constructs. By the respectful (and devout performance of) that (kind of) worship (the mind) certainly dissolves away.[1] (147) (145)

अत्रैकतमयुक्तिस्थे योत्पद्येत दिनाद्दिनम् ।
भरिताकारता सात्र तृप्तिरत्यन्तपूर्णता ॥ १४८ ॥

atraikatamayuktisthe yotpadyeta dinād dinam |
bharitākāratā sātra tṛptir atyantapūrṇatā || 148 ||

The state which is (Bhairava's) form filled (with all things) that arises day after day when one abides here in any one of (these) practices (*yukti*), is that (spiritual) satisfaction (experienced) here which is perfect plentitude. (148) (146)

महाशून्यालये वह्नौ भूताक्षविषयादिकम् ।
हूयते मनसा सार्धं स होमश्चेतनास्रुचा ॥ १४९ ॥
यागोऽत्र परमेशानि तुष्टिरानन्दलक्षणा ।

mahāśūnyālaye vahnau bhūtākṣaviṣayādikam |
hūyate manasā sārdhaṃ sa homaś cetanāsrucā || 149 ||
yāgo'tra parameśāni tuṣṭir ānandalakṣaṇā |

The offering of (all) the elements, the senses and (their) objects etc, along with the mind into the fire which is the Abode of the Great Void with the sacrificial ladle of awareness—that is (true) oblation (*homa*). O Supreme Goddess, the sacrifice (*yāga*) here is the satisfaction which is bliss. (149–150ab) (147–148ab)

क्षपणात्सर्वपापानां त्राणात्सर्वस्य पार्वति ॥ १५० ॥
रुद्रशक्तिसमावेशस्तत्क्षेत्रं भावना परा ।
अन्यथा तस्य तत्त्वस्य कापूजा कश्च तृप्यति ॥ १५१ ॥

kṣapaṇāt sarvapāpānāṃ trāṇāt sarvasya pārvati || 150 ||
rudraśaktisamāveśas tat kṣetraṃ bhāvanā parā |
anyathā tasya tattvasya kā pūjā kaś ca tṛpyati || 151 ||

O Pārvatī! the penetration of Rudra's power is that sacred place of pilgrimage (*kṣetra*)[2] which is supreme contemplation (*parā bhāvanā*) because it removes (*kṣapanāt*) all sins and saves all (living beings) (*trānāt*). Otherwise, what worship (could there be) of that (non-dual) reality and who (could be) satisfied (thereby)? (150cd-151) (148cd-149)

स्वतन्त्रानन्दचिन्मात्रसारः स्वात्मा हि सर्वतः ।
आवेशनं तत्स्वरूपे स्वात्मनः स्नानमीरितम् ॥ १५२ ॥

svatantrānandacinmātrasāraḥ svātmā hi sarvataḥ |
āveśanaṃ tatsvarūpe svātmanaḥ snānam īritam || 152 ||

The essence of one's own Self is surely freedom, bliss and pure consciousness. (The purifying) bath is said to be the penetration in all respects of one's own Self into that essential nature. (152) (150)

यैरेव पूज्यते द्रव्यैस्तर्प्यते वा परापरः ।
यश्चैव पूजकः सर्वः स एवैकः क्व पूजनम् ॥ १५३ ॥

yair eva pūjyate dravyais tarpyate vā parāparaḥ |
yaś caiva pūjakaḥ sarvaḥ sa evaikaḥ kva pūjanam || 153 ||

Those sacrificial substances with which Parā and (Bhairava) the Supreme (Lord) (*parāpara*) are worshipped or with which they are offered libation and he who is the worshipper—all this is one only. What then remains of worship? (153) (151)

व्रजेत्प्राणो विशेज्जीव इच्छया कुटिलाकृतिः ।
दीर्घात्मा सा महादेवी परक्षेत्रं परापरा ॥ १५४ ॥

vrajet prāṇo viśej jīva icchayā kuṭilākṛtiḥ |
dīrghātmā sā mahādevī parakṣetraṃ parāparā || 154 ||

The exhaled breath (*prāṇa*) should exit and the living being (*apāna*—the inhaled breath) should enter. (Impelled) by the will, its form is crooked. That Great Goddess is extensive (*dīrghātmā*), both transcendent and immanent (*parāparā*), She is the most excellent sacred field (*kṣetra*). (154) (152)

अस्यामनुचरन् तिष्ठन् महानन्दमयेऽध्वरे ।
तया देव्या समाविष्टः परं भैरवमाप्नुयात् ॥ १५५ ॥
षट् शतानि दिवारात्रौ सहस्राण्येकविंशतिः ।
जपो देव्याः समुद्दिष्टः प्राणस्यान्ते सुदुर्लभः ॥ १५६ ॥

asyām anucaran tiṣṭhan mahānandamaye'dhvare |
tayā devyā samāviṣṭaḥ paraṃ bhairavam āpnuyāt || 155 ||
ṣaṭ śatāni divā rātrau sahasrāṇy ekaviṃśatiḥ |
japo devyāḥ samuddiṣṭaḥ prāṇasyānte sudurlabhaḥ || 156 ||

Following along, and abiding within her, in the sacrificial rite made of Great Bliss, may he who is penetrated by that Goddess attain Supreme Bhairava. (155) (153)

इत्येतत्कथितं देवि परमामृतमुत्तमम् ।
एतच्च नैव कस्यापि प्रकाश्यम् तु कदाचन ॥ १५७ ॥
परशिष्ये खले क्रूरे अभक्ते गुरुपादयोः ।
निर्विकल्पमतीनां तु वीराणामुन्नतात्मनाम् ॥ १५८ ॥
भक्तानां गुरुवर्गस्य दातव्यं निर्विशङ्कया ।

ity etat kathitaṃ devi paramāmṛtam uttamam |
etac ca naiva kasyāpi prakāśyam tu kadācana || 157 ||
paraśiṣye khale krūre abhakte gurupādayoḥ |
nirvikalpamatīnāṃ tu vīrāṇām unnatātmanām || 158 ||
bhaktānāṃ guruvargasya dātavyaṃ nirviśaṅkayā |

Thus, O Goddess! I have told (you about) this most excellent, supreme (immortal) nectar. It should never be disclosed to anyone who is a disciple of another (tradition), who is evil and cruel, and is not devoted to (his) master's feet. (But this teaching) should certainly be given without hesitation to those elevated adepts (*vīra*) whose mind is free of thought and are devoted to the masters. (157–159ab) (155cd-157)

ग्रामो राज्यं पुरं देशः पुत्रदारकुटुम्बकम् ॥ १५९ ॥
सर्वमेतत्परित्यज्य ग्राह्यमेतन्मृगेक्षणे ।
किमेभिरस्थिरैर्देवि स्थिरं परमिदं धनम् ॥ १६० ॥
प्राणा अपि प्रदातव्या न देयं परमामृतम् ।

grāmo rājyaṃ puraṃ deśaḥ putradārakuṭumbakam || 159 ||
sarvam etat parityajya grāhyam etan mṛgekṣaṇe |
kim ebhir asthirair devi sthiraṃ param idaṃ dhanam || 160 ||
prāṇā api pradātavyā na deyaṃ paramāmṛtam |

O Gazelle-eyed One! having abandoned all this, namely, (one's) village, kingdom, city and country, son, wife and family, one should lay hold of this (teaching). O Goddess! What is the use of these impermanent things? (Only) this supreme wealth is permanent. One can even give (one's) vital breaths (to others but) one should not give (this), the supreme nectar (of immortality). (159cd-161ab) (158–159)

श्रीदेवी उवाच
देवदेव महादेव परितृप्तास्मि शंकर ॥ १६१ ॥
रुद्रयामलतन्त्रस्य सारमद्यावधारितम् ।
सर्वशक्तिप्रभेदानां हृदयं ज्ञातमद्य च ॥ १६२ ॥
इत्युक्त्वानन्दिता देवी कण्ठे लग्ना शिवस्य तु ॥ १६३ ॥

śrīdevī uvāca
devadeva mahādeva paritṛptāsmi śaṃkara || 161 ||
rudrayāmalatantrasya sāram adyāvadhāritam |

sarvaśaktiprabhedānāṃ hṛdayaṃ jñātam adya ca || 162 ||
ity uktvānanditā devī kaṇṭhe lagnā śivasya tu |

The Goddess said:

O God of the gods, O Great God! O Śaṅkara! I am completely satisfied. Today I have understood the essence of the Rudrayāmala Tantra. Today I have (come to) know the heart of all the various kinds of energies. Having said this, the Goddess, (thus) made blissful, embraced Śiva indeed. (161cd-163ab) (160–161)

ity etat kathitaṃ devi paramāmṛtam uttamam |
etac ca naiva kasyāpi prakāśyam tu kadācana || 157 ||
paraśiṣye khale krūre abhakte gurupādayoḥ |
nirvikalpamatīnāṃ tu vīrāṇām unnatātmanām || 158 ||
bhaktānāṃ guruvargasya dātavyaṃ nirviśaṅkayā |

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ग्रामो राज्यं पुरं देशः पुत्रदारकुटुम्बकम् ॥ १५९ ॥
सर्वमेतत्परित्यज्य ग्राह्यमेतन्मृगेक्षणे ।
किमेभिरस्थिरैर्देवि स्थिरं परमिदं धनम् ॥ १६० ॥
प्राणा अपि प्रदातव्या न देयं परमामृतम् ।

grāmo rājyaṃ puraṃ deśaḥ putradārakuṭumbakam || 159 ||
sarvam etat parityajya grāhyam etan mṛgekṣaṇe |
kim ebhir asthirair devi sthiraṃ param idaṃ dhanam || 160 ||
prāṇā api pradātavyā na deyaṃ paramāmṛtam |

O Gazelle-eyed One! having abandoned all this, namely, (one's) village, kingdom, city and country, son, wife and family, one should lay hold of this (teaching). O Goddess! What is the use of these impermanent things? (Only) this supreme wealth is permanent. One can even give (one's) vital breaths (to others but) one should not give (this), the supreme nectar (of immortality). (159cd-161ab) (158–159)

श्रीदेवी उवाच
देवदेव महादेव परितृप्तास्मि शंकर ॥ १६१ ॥
रुद्रयामलतन्त्रस्य सारमद्यावधारितम् ।
सर्वशक्तिप्रभेदानां हृदयं ज्ञातमद्य च ॥ १६२ ॥
इत्युक्त्वानन्दिता देवी कण्ठे लग्ना शिवस्य तु ॥ १६३ ॥

śrīdevī uvāca
devadeva mahādeva paritṛptāsmi śaṃkara || 161 ||
rudrayāmalatantrasya sāram adyāvadhāritam |

sarvaśaktiprabhedānāṃ hṛdayaṃ jñātam adya ca || 162 ||
ity uktvānanditā devī kaṇṭhe lagnā śivasya tu |

The Goddess said:

O God of the gods, O Great God! O Śaṅkara! I am completely satisfied. Today I have understood the essence of the Rudrayāmala Tantra. Today I have (come to) know the heart of all the various kinds of energies. Having said this, the Goddess, (thus) made blissful, embraced Śiva indeed. (161cd-163ab) (160–161)

APPENDIX 3

TEXTS QUOTED IN THE COMMENTARIES TO THE *VIJÑĀNABHAIRAVA*

Ajaḍapramātṛsiddhi v. 15. Kau ad v. 27

Atharvaśikhopaniṣad (where it is said): U ad v, 39

tathā cātharvaśikhopaniṣat yāvasāne caturthyardhamātrā sā vidyudvatī sarvavarṇā puruṣadaivatā, sa hi eṣa oṃkāraś caturakṣaraś catuṣpādaś caturakṣaramātraḥ sthūlam etad hrasvo dīrghaḥ plutaḥ | iti | oṃ oṃ oṃ iti trir uktvā caturthaḥ śāntātmā plutaprayogeṇa samastam om iti prayujya ātmajyotiḥ sakṛdāvartya |

'The fourth (part of OṂ), at the end, is a half measure. It flashes brilliantly, and is all the phonemes (and colours). It is the deity which is the soul. This is this syllable OṂ made of four letters, possessing four feet and is the measure of four phonemes. Gross, it is short, long and prolated. Having uttered the three—OṂ OṂ OṂ—the fourth is tranquil. By applying the prolated (form), it is OṂ which is the All. Having abandoned that (and gone beyond it), the Light of the Self (appears), having repeated it (just) once.'

Anuttarabhaṭṭāraka U ad v. 138 (136) *uktaṃ ca bhairavasrotasi anuttarabhaṭṭārake*

mṛtaceṣṭasya piṇḍasya na kiṃcid upalabhyate |
sukhaṃ duḥkhaṃ na caivāsti paramānandabhāvanāt ||
jijñāsārahitaṃ sthānaṃ yatra devo nirañjanaḥ |
akālakalanāhetur gamāgamavivarjitaḥ ||
nirālambo nirutsāhaḥ śūnyabhūtaḥ śivaḥ svayam |
saṃjñānāśena nirjīvasaṃjñā sā vyomarūpiṇī ||

'Nothing at all is perceived of the body of one who acts when dead. There is no pleasure and no pain because (he is engaged) in contemplating supreme bliss. (That) place is devoid of the desire to know (anything). (It is) where God is the Stainless One (*nirañjana*) who is devoid of the going and coming (of rebirth) and is the cause that effects timeless (eternity). Devoid of (objective) support and exertion, He is the Void, Śiva Himself. (Along with Him is the Goddess). By the destruction of (the dead man's individual) consciousness (*saṃjñā*), She is called 'the Lifeless One' and Her form is the Sky (of consciousness).'

vicarāmi na caikākī kadācic chūnyarūpatā |
sarvaṃ sarvamayaś cāhaṃ tad rame'haṃ tvayā saha ||

'I, whose nature is Voidness, never wander alone. I am made of all things and am everything. I sport with You. Sometimes the universe, which is like this, is said to be this objectivity.'

Amara U ad v. 130 *anantaṃ suravartma kham | ity amaraḥ*

Ālokamālā U ad v. 127 (125) same verse is quoted by Kṣemarāja in SpNir p. 28

Īśvarapratyabhijñā U (Kṣemarāja) ad v. 12 1ıp 1/5/16; Kau ad v. 29 ĪP 4/1/12 variant quoted by U ad v. 108 (107 (106)) Kau ad v. 43 ĪP 1/6/4–5, 3/2/8

Ucchuṣmabhairavatantra U ad v. 137 (135)

yāvan na vedakā ete tāvad vedyāḥ kathaṃ priye |
vedakaṃ vedyam ekaṃ tu tattvaṃ nasty aśucis tataḥ ||

'O beloved if perceivers were not to exist how could these objects of perception exist? The one reality is subject and object. Thus, impurity does not exist.'

This verse is quoted by Kṣemarāja in the ŚSūvi ad 1/1 where says it is from the *Ucchuṣmabhairavatantra.*

Upaniṣad U ad v. 130 (128)

īśvaraprerito gacchet svargaṁ vā śvabhram eva vā |

The Upaniṣad declares: 'Impelled by the Lord one goes to heaven or else to hell.'

Ekākṣarakośa U ad v, 130 (128) *aikāraḥ syān maheśvaraḥ |*

Kaṭhopaniṣad Kau ad v. 127 (125) *Kaṭhopaniṣad* 2/2/15 U ad v. 137 (135) *Kaṭhopaniṣad* 2/310

Karmakāṇḍakramāvalī U ad v. 57 (56)

trayīsaptacaturyugmamaye tritayavartmani |
sthito yaḥ śaktisahitaḥ sa jayaty amṛteśvaraḥ ||

'Amṛteśvara is victorious. He who, accompanied by (his) power, is on the triple Path made of the three, seven, four and the pair.' (This is not in Somaśambhu.)

Kalāpavyākaraṇam U ad v. 154cd-156 *am ityanusvāraḥ* the nasal resonance (*anusvāra*) defined as 'AṂ' U ad v. 130 *avarṇa ivarṇe e.*

Kalhaṇa U ad v. 135 (133)

śālīn palālapuruṣo 'vati yaḥ kṛśānu –
dagdhānanaś caṭakapeṭakabhītidānaiḥ |
trātuṃ sa eva vihito vipine vidadhyāt
kiṃ tatra bhañjanakṛtāṃ vanakuñjarāṇām || iti ||

'The scarecrow in the rice field, whose face is thin and burnt, protects by instilling fear in the multitude of sparrows. (But) used to save (someone) in a forest, what could it do there (to protect him from) wild, ferocious elephants?'

Kṛṣṇadvaipāyana U ad v. 81 2

sparśān kṛtvā bahirbāhyāṃś cakṣuś caivāntare bhruvoḥ |
prāṇāpānau samau kṛtvā nāsābhyantaracāriṇau

'Having touched (the body) externally (several times) and (directed) the outer eyes in between the eyebrows and made the exhaled and inhaled breath that move within the nostrils equal ...'

Kramastotra U ad v. 155–156 (153–155) Reference to the *Kramastotra* presumably by Erakanātha.

Candrajñāna: U ad v. 134 (132)

adha ūrdhvaṃ diśaḥ sarvā bhūmir āpo 'nalas tathā |
vāyuś ca khaṃ mano buddhir ahaṅkāraś ca ye guṇāḥ ||
sarvaṃ śūnyaṃ nirālambaṃ tatra sarvaṃ pratiṣṭhitam |
yat kiṃcit sakalaṃ bhāvarūpaṃ tantreṣu varṇitam ||

tad asārataraṃ candra māyāsvapnopamaṃ sthitam |
bhrāntiṃ tyajasva vai putra sarvaṃ śūnye pratiṣṭhitam ||
śūnyāt pravartate śaktiḥ śkater varṇāḥ prajajñire |
varṇebhyaś ca tathā mantrā mantrebhyaḥ sṛṣṭir avyayā ||
tasmāc chūnyaṃ jagad dhyāyed yan na naśyet kadācana ||

'All the lower and the upper directions, Earth, Water, Fire, Air and Space, mind, intellect, ego and these qualities (of Nature)—everything is Void. Without support, everything is established there (in Emptiness). Whatever differentiated (*sakala*), existing thing (*bhāvarūpa*) is described in the Tantras, is completely without essence, O Candra, it is like the dream of illusion (*māyā*). O son, renounce error, everything is established in the Void. Power (*śakti*) comes forth from the Void, from power the letters were born and, in the same way, Mantras from letters and from Mantras the imperishable creation. Thus, you should meditate on the universe as the Void that is never destroyed.'

Jayaratha U ad v. 155–156 (153–155) *jayarathas tu—sahābhyāṃ—sakārahakārābhyāṃ jāto japaḥ sahajo'kṛtrimaḥ |*

sa-hau kṣapādināmānāvaṃdharottaracāriṇau |
parasparadveṣaratau mattau nāgahuḍopamau ||
kastau rodhayituṃ śakto vīryaṃ muktvāsvaraṃ mahat |

'(The letters) SA and HA are the knowledge of Night and Day, that move down and up (respectively). They are said to dislike one another like a mad elephant and a ram. What can block them except the vitality (*vīrya*) which is the great Unstruck Sound (*asvara*)?'

Jñānāmṛtarasāyana U ad v. 90 (91) *Jñānāmṛtarasāyana*:

mātrārdhamātrāt paramaṃ tadardhāc ca paraṃ param (> *parāt param*) *|*
tattvātītaṃ paraṃ tattvam abhāvaṃ bhāvam āśritam ||

'The supreme comes from the measure (*mātra*) of the half measure and half of that is the supreme beyond the supreme. The supreme reality transcends the reality principles (*tattva*). It is Non-being based on Being.'

Tattvamañjarī U ad v. 104

yatas tato vāstu bhayaṃ yady ahaṃ nāma kiṃcana |
aham eva na kiṃcic ced bhayaṃ kasyopajāyate || iti ||

'There is fear of something if I (were to be) something. Thus, if I myself am nothing, then whose fear arises?'

Dvayasampattivārttikam U ad v. 90

Śivopādhyāya quotes verses 5 to 19ab *Dvayasampattivārttikam* by Vāmanadatta.

U ad v. 104. In such ways, the Lord is contemplated in every book (of our tradition) as the (supreme) ego (*ahaṃrūpa*). The venerable Hrasvanātha, the son of Harṣadatta, has also (written) in the *Dvayasampatti*:

śrīhrasvanāthena harṣadattasūnunāpi
ahaṃkāramayī bhūmi----------|
ityādinā advayasaṃpattau | parimitāhaṃbhāvas tu pariharaṇīyaḥ |

'The plane of the ego (*ahaṃkāra*) ...' Limited (conditioned) egoity should be abandoned.

Śrībhagavata: U ad v. 123 (121) *Śrībhagavata*:

dehaṁ ca naśvaramavasthitamutthitaṁ vā
siddho na paśyati yato'dhyagamatsvarūpam |

'The body is perishable. The accomplished yogi (*siddha*) does not observe whether it is engaged in some activity (*avasthita*) or is striving (*utthita*) (for something), for (*yataḥ*) he has known (his) own (true) nature.'

Bhagavadgītā Kau ad v. 29 BhGī 10/8cd; U ad v. 74 (73) BhGī 16/21–22; Kau ad v. 93 (92) BhGī 2/24ab; Kau ad v. 125 (123) BhGī 5/18; U ad v. 138 (136) BhGī 2/13; U ad v. 74 (73) BhGī 16/21–22; Kau ad v. 93 (92) BhGī 2/24ab; Kau ad v. 125 (123) BhGī 5/18; U ad v. 138 (136) BhGī 2/13; U ad v. 129 (127) BhGī 6/36cd. Kashmiri version. This verse is not found in the common edition of the *Gītā*. BhGī 6/26; Kau ad v. 141–142ab (139–140ab) BhGī 5/8cd-9ab, 5/10.

Tattvārthacintāmaṇi U ad v. 155–156 (153–155), (156)

prāk saṃvit prāṇe pariṇatā | iti śruteḥ

'The first transformation of consciousness is the vital breath.'

Śivopādhyāya says that this often quoted line is from '*Śruti*'. We know that this line is drawn from Kallaṭa's *Tattvārthacintāmaṇi*. Śivopādhyāya is treating Kallaṭa as an authority on the level of the primary revelation.

Tantrakośa: U v 34

kaśabdena parāśaktiḥ pālakaḥ śivasaṃjñayā |
śivaśaktisamāyogaṃ kapālaṃ paripaṭhyate ||

'The supreme power is (denoted) by the word '*ka*' (sky), and (the word) *pālaka* ('the protector') is a name of Śiva. (Thus, the word) *kapāla* (skull) is said to be the union of Śiva and Śakti.' Unknown source

Tantrāloka U ad v. 24 TĀ 1/168–170, corresponding to MV 2/23, 22 and 21; TĀ 1/211; U ad v. 90 (91) TĀ 3/134 (133cd-134ab), TĀ 3/143cd-144ab (143). U ad v. 122 (121) TĀ 4/217cd-220ab. TĀ 4/4/213cd-220ab is a literal quote of MV 18/74–80. TĀ 4/213cd-217ab; TĀ 4/217cd-220ab TĀ 4/213cd-221ab is a literal quote of MV 18/74–81. TĀ 4/221cd-222ab.

Tantrāloka U ad v. 24 TĀ 1/168–170, corresponding to MV 2/23, 22 and 21; TĀ 1/211; 47) U ad v. 122 (121) TĀ 4/217cd-220ab. TĀ 4/4/213cd-220ab is a literal quote of MV 18/74–80.; TĀ 4/213cd-217ab;

Triṃśikāvivaraṇa U ad v. 77

The method taught according to the (Krama) tradition of the Siddhas and Yoginīs (*siddhayoginīsaṃpradāya*) (is as follows):

jñānaṃ khakaulārṇavam ūrmirūpaṃ
svabodhaviśrāntivimarśamantraḥ |
melāpasiddhāḥ svavimarśaśūnyaṃ
śāktaṃ mahāsaṃhṛti śāṃbhavaṃ kham ||

'1) Knowledge is the ocean of the Sky of Kaula (the union of Śiva and Śakti) and its form, the Wave. 2) Mantra is the reflective awareness of rest within one's own awakened consciousness. 3) The Melāpa Siddhas are the Void of one's own reflective awareness. 4) The Śākta (Siddhas) are the Great Withdrawal and 5) Śāmbhava is the Sky (of consciousness).'

iti siddhayoginīsaṃpradāyayuktyupadeśaḥ | vṛndacakranirṇayas tu bahudhā bhaṭṭārakakṛtaprākṛtatriṃśakāvivaraṇe vicāryaḥ ity alam || 77 ||

The final teaching concerning Vṛndacakra is (repeated) many times in the *Triṃśikāvivaraṇa* written in Prākṛt by Bhaṭṭāraka. One should reflect (on that). So (this will) suffice.

Tapasvirāja U ad v. 104 *tad uktaṃ tapasvirājena*

suviṣamamamatādaṃṣṭrāvidalitajanadhairyaśoṇitapipāsuḥ |
aham iti piśāca eṣa tvatsmṛtimātreṇa kiṅkarībhavati ||

Tapasvirāja has said (also)

'The demon of ego (*aham*), who craves the blood (that flows) when the mental stability of people has been torn asunder by the very jagged (and sharp) fangs of egoity, is reduced to the condition of a slave just by recollecting You.'

Taittirīyopaniṣad Kau ad v. 127 (125) *Taittirīyopaniṣad* 2/4/1, 3/6/1

Niṣkriyānandanātha U ad v. 77

karās trayodaśākārāḥ sarvākṣakṣobhavṛttayaḥ |
aṅkaṃ tu nirniketāyāḥ saṃvido dehavistaraḥ ||
etat karāṅkam ākhyātaṃ tasya prāsādanāvṛtam |
niṣkaraṅkaṃ samuddiṣṭaṃ nirālambaṃ paraṃ varam ||

'The rays (*kara*) have thirteen forms which are the modalities of the arousal of all the (thirteen) senses. The 'mark' (*aṅka*) is the extension of the body of consciousness which is Without Abode. That is called 'Karāṅka'. Enveloped in its tranquility, it is said to be Niṣkaraṅka (the Disembodied). (Self sustained,) it is the supreme boon, devoid of (all phenomenal) support.'

Netratantra U ad v. 42 NT 21/60–63, NT 21/64–67 NT 21/68–69ab

Netratantroddyota

24) U v 68: The sixteen seats are taught in the Kula tradition[1] as, for example, (in the passage beginning with):

Beginning of a passage quoted from an unknown source by Kṣemarāja in his commentary on NT 7/1cd-5. The whole passage is quoted in TĀv ad 19/15–16. See my translation.

meḍhrasyādhaḥ kulo jñeyo madhye tu viṣasaṁjñitaḥ |
mūle tu śāktaḥ kathito bodhanādapravartakaḥ ||
agnisaṁjñastataścordhvamaṅgulānāṁ catuṣṭaye |
nābhyadhaḥ pavanādhāre nābhāveva ghaṭābhidhaḥ ||

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[1] See Dyczkowski 2023 appendix A to chapter nineteen of my translation of the *Tantrāloka* volume 9 (pp. 443 ff especially 450) where a passage cited by Kṣemarāja is quoted in his commentary on NT 7/1cd ff in which the sixteen foundations are enumerated.

'One should know that Kula is below the genitals. In between the two is that which is called 'Poison'. It is said that is Power that impels the Point and Sound (corresponding to exhalation and inhalation) is in the base (of the genital in union). Then that which is called 'fire' is four finger (breadths) above (that). There is a foundation of the breath below the navel and (one) in the navel itself, which is called 'the jar'.

Pañcadaśī U ad v. 131 This verse is a reworking of PD 12/31

Paramārthasāra Kau ad v. 124 (122) PS 12; 56) Kau ad v. 135 (133) PS 16ab, 7; 56) Kau ad v. 135 (133) PS 16ab, 7;

Parātrīśikā U ad v. 24 Mentioned but not quoted: pervasion of Mantra taught by the venerable *Parātrīśikā*

Paribhāṣāsūtra U ad v. 90 *ekadharmiṇo vā savarṇe prakṛtiḥ* |

or else it is natural (that two letters), with the same (phonemic) quality, (should merge) in a common vowel (*ekadharmiṇo vā savarṇe prakṛtiḥ*).'

Pāṇini U ad v. 42 *ūkāloj hrasvadīrghaplutaḥ* 'A vowel whose time is that of short u1, long ū2 and the prolated ū3 is called respectively short (*hrasva*), long (*dīrgha*) and prolated (*pluta*).' 1/2/27
Pā 1/2/27 U ad v. 42

Bṛhadaraṇyakopaniṣad U ad v. 135 (133) BṛUp 1/4/2.

Brāhmaṇa: U ad v. 155–156 (153–155)

etau vai yamaśvau yamasya śvānau yadahorātre tāvidaṃ manuṣyāharaṇāvantaḥprāṇapraveśenopasṛjantau pravahataḥ |

'Indeed, these two are the dogs of Yama (the god of death). Yama's two dogs are Day and Night. These two, steal away people by the current which is the two created by the inward entry (and exit) of the vital breath.'

Maṅgalāśāstra U ad v. 34

Mahārthamañjarī Kau ad v. 124 (122) MM v 4, U ad v. 127 (125) MM v 32 53; U ad v. 131 (129) MM 55 U ad v. 155–156 (153–155) MM v 56.

Mālinīvijayavārtika U ad v. 90 (91) MVV 1/887cd-891ab, 893cd-895; U ad v. 138 (136) MVV 1/1084–1087.

Mālinīvijayottara Kau ad v. 134 (132) MV 3/5–10ab.

Mālāmantrāvasara U ad v. 138 (136) *iti mālāmantrāvasare bhairavavapuḥsvarūpā dehāntaraprāptir eva dvaipāyanena nirdiṣṭā* |

Dvaipāyana has taught in the *Mālāmantrāvasara* that the attainment of another body is Bhairava's body.

Mālinīkalpottara Kau ad v. v 57 (56):

adhvaṣaṭkādi saṃtyajya jitvā cendriyamaṇḍalam |
kāraṇaiḥ kṛtakṛtyo'sau rājate sūryavad bhuvi ||

'Having abandoned this same group of Six Paths and the rest and conquered the assembly of the senses along with the (fundamental) causes, he who has accomplished (his) goal, shines in the world like the sun.'

Mālinīvijayavārtika U v 90 (91) MVV 1/887cd-891ab, 893cd-895; U ad v. 138 (136) MVV 1/184–187

Yamasūkta U ad v. 155–156 (153–155) And so too, the *Yamasūkta* (Hymn to Death):

yau te śvānau yama rakṣitārau
caturakṣau pathirakṣī nṛcakṣasau |
tābhyāmenaṃ paridehi rājan
svasti cāsmā anamīvaṃ ca dehi ||
udanasāvasutṛpā ududvalau
yamasya dūtau carato janā anu |
tāvasmabhyaṃ dṛśaye sūryāya
punardātāmasumadyeha bhadram ||

'These, your two dogs, are Yama's protectors (of Day and Night). They have four eyes; they protect the wayfarer and watch over men. O king! due to them (men) lament. They take possession of the embodied and (their) health and all that is good. They make a wave that is a fetter that encircles (men). They are the messengers of death that run after people. Oh! save us, we who contemplate the Sun that bestows what is good here below, and inebriates.' Ṛgveda 10/14

śvānau dvau śyāvaśavalau vaivasvatakulodbhavau |
tābhyāṃ piṇḍaṃ pradāsyāmi syātāṃ me tāvahiṃsakau ||

'These two dogs, (one of) many colors, (the other) black, are born in the family of Vaivasvata (the Sun). I will offer these two, the ball of rice (*piṇḍa*) (which is normally offered to the ancestors), may they do me no harm.' (I suppose this is also *Yamasūkta*)

Yājñavalkya's *smṛti* U ad v. 123 (121) Yājñavalkya's *smṛti* itself:

ijyācāradamāhiṁsādānasvādhyāyakarmaṇām |
ayaṁ sa paramo dharmo yadyogenātmadarśanam ||

'Out of (all good) deeds, namely, reverence, (right) conduct, self restraint, non-violence, charity and study, this is the most excellent *dharma*, namely, the vision of the Self (attained) by Yoga.'

Yogavāsiṣṭha U ad v. 24 YVā 2/25/6, 7, and 9. U ad v.25 YVā 2/25/19cd-22ab, one verse quoted in commentary on YVā 1/18/19 and 2/38/44 possibly misplaced from the original text. YVā 2/25/51cd-52ab; U ad v. 75 YVā 2/25/60, U ad v, 100 (99) YVā 1/61/18

Śuka (*Yogavāsiṣṭha*) U ad v. 135 (133) *nistraiguṇye pathi viharatāṃ ko vidhiḥ ko niṣedhaḥ |*

Śuka teaches: 'travel playfully along the path free of the three qualities—what is prescribed and what is prohibited? (Nothing at all!)' Śuka teaches in some places in the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* but I could not trace this reference there.

Yogavāsiṣṭha 2/83/6–13ab[2]

vācyavācakasaṁbandhaṁ vinā bodho na jāyate |
yasmāt tasmāt tvayi mayā dṛṣṭam eva pravarṇitam || 6 ||

kalpanādṛṣṭidṛṣṭasyāpi tava purato varṇanaṁ tu vācyavācakaśabdārthasaṁbandhakalpanaṁ vinā nirviśeṣasya vyutpādanāyogāt tatkalpanena tvadvyutpādanārtham ity āha vācyeti || 6 ||

yad eva vācy upārūḍham etad rāma sadaiva te |
rūḍhādhibhautikadṛśaḥ kṣaṇān māyātmatāṁ gatam || 7 ||

tannirasanaṁ tu kalpitaprakriyāyāṁ satyatābuddhirmā bhūdityetadarthamityāha yadeveti | he rāma sadaiva cirābhyāsājjagati rūḍhādhibhautika-

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[2] *Editor's Note:* This part related to *Yogavāsiṣṭha* was left incomplete in Mark Dyczkowski's manuscrips. I have retained it here.

dṛśaste yadeva vācyupārūḍhaṁ tadeva kṣaṇānmāyātmatāṁ satyatābhrāntiṁ gatam || 7 ||

na bhairavī sā naivāso bhairavo naiva saṁkṣayaḥ |
samastameva tadbhrāntimātraṁ cidvyoma bhāsate || 8 ||

na bhairavītyādinā punarniṣedhena tatsamastameva bhrāntimātraṁ paramārthataścidvyomeveti bhāsate || 8 ||

svapnanirmāṇapuravat saṁkalparaṇavegavat |
kathārthasārtharasavan manorājyavilāsavat || 9 ||

yathā svapnapuraṁ svacche vyomni mauktikadhīryathā |
yathā keśoṇḍrakaṁ vyomni tathā'cid bhāti cidghane || 10 ||

tatha acit cidghane bhāti bhrāntyā || 10 ||

cinmātrākāśam evāccham kacati svātmanātmani |
tathā nāma yadābhāti tadātmaivaṁ jagattayā || 11 ||

prabodhena tarhi kathaṁ bhāti tadāha cinmātreti || 11 ||

yathā cidvyomni cakati sva evātmā tathā paṭe |
tathā kacati tat tatra kalpāntānalanartane || 12 ||

tarhi kiṁ svaprakāśacidātmanaḥ svaparakacane viśeṣo'sti netyāha yatheti || 12 ||

śivayor evaṁ ākāro nirākāro'ṅga varṇitaḥ | 13ab

Yogaśāstra U ad v 62 (61)

dhyātṛdhyāne parityajya kramād dhyeyaikagocaram |
nivātadīpavaccittaṁ samādhirabhidhīyate ||

'Having abandoned progressively the mind whose sole field (of operation is) the object of meditation, meditation and the one who meditates, the contemplative absorption (*samādhi*) (that arises) is said to be (steady) like (the flame of) a lamp in a (still) windless (place).'

U ad v. 67 (68) Patañjali has taught the method of the discipline of Yoga (*yogaśāstra*) (saying):

'The modality (*vṛtti*) of blocking the outer and inner (breath), well examined (in terms of) place, time and number (of the breathing becomes) long and subtle.'

YSū 2/50 *bāhyābhyantarastambhavṛttir deśakālasaṃkhyābhiḥ paridṛṣṭo dīrghasūkṣmaḥ |*

Yogasūtra U v 34 *Yogasūtra* YSū 3/3; U ad v. 129 (127) YSū 1/12; U ad v. 67 (66) YSū 2/50; 2/49; 30) U ad v. 76 YSū 3/25, 3/16; U ad v. 67 (66) YSū 2/50; 2/49

Rahasyaśāstra U ad v. 77 (*rahasyaśāstra*):

'In the beginning the head of (A) is Raudrī. The mouth is said to be Vāmā. Ambikā is said to be the arms and Jyeṣṭhā is located on the weapon.'

Vākyasudhā U ad v 116 (114) *Vākyasudhā*:

kāmādyāś cittasādṛśyāt tatsākṣitvena cetanām |
dhyāyed dṛśyānuviddho'yaṃ samādhiḥ savikalpakaḥ ||

1) 'Desire and the like are similar to the mind, and so, (the yogi) should meditate on (mental) awareness (*cetanā*) as their witness. This absorption with thought (*savikalpakasamādhi*) is threaded through with the object of perception.'

asaṅgaḥ saccidānandaḥ svaprabho dvaitavarjitaḥ |
asmīti śabdaviddho'yaṃ savikalpasamāhitaḥ ||

2) 'The state of concentration with thought is detached. It is Being, Consciousness and Bliss, self-luminous, devoid of duality, and threaded through with (the sense) of 'I am'.'

svānubhūtirasāveśād dṛśyaśabdānupekṣya tu |
nirvikalpaḥ samādhiḥ syān nivātasthaladīpavat ||

3) 'By penetrating into the aesthetic savor (*rasa*) of the experience of one's own (deeper Self), having abandoned dependence on the object of perception and words, (this is) the absorption, free of thought constructs, (which is unmoving) like (the flame of a) lamp in a windless place.'

hṛdīva bāhyadeśe'pi yasmin kasmiṃśca vastuni |
samādhir ādyaḥ sanmātre nāmarūpapṛthaksthitaḥ ||

4) 'As in the heart so too in an outer place, in whatever entity it be, the first (kind of) absorption, aloof from name and form, is in pure Being alone.'

akhaṇḍaikarasaṃ vastu saccidānandalakṣaṇam |
ity avicchinnacinteyaṃ samādhir madhyamo bhavet ||

5) 'The middle (kind of) absorption is the unbroken thought directed at a reality (*vastu*), which is one undivided aesthetic savor (*rasa*), the characteristic of which is Being, Consciousness and Bliss.'

stabdhībhāvarasāsvādāt tṛtīyaḥ pūrvavan mataḥ |
etaiḥ samādhibhiḥ ṣaḍbhir nayet kālaṃ nirantaram ||

6) 'The third (kind of absorption, free of thought), is considered to be like the previous one because it (is the experience of) the relish of the aesthetic savor of the state of stasis (*stabdhībhāva*). (The yogi) should pass (his) time constantly with these six absorptions.'

dehābhimāne galite vijñāte paramātmani |
yatra yatra mano yāti tatra tatra samādhayaḥ ||

'(The yogi experiences) the absorptions there, wherever the mind goes, when the identification with the body has ceased and the Supreme Self has been known.'

Cf Wherever the mind goes, whether outside or within, Śiva's state is present there. (Śiva) pervades (everything), so where (else) could it go?[3] Cf. VBh 116 (114) and 129 (127)

Vājasaneyabrāhmaṇa (declares): U ad v. 65 (63)

'This (world) is full (and complete) as is that (transcendent reality). The full (and complete) arises from the full (and complete). Taking the full from what is full, only the full remains.'

Vāmanānātha U ad v. 155–156 (153–155) Vāmanānātha declares:

aprāṇamasvaraṃ dhyātvā paśyantyā nirvibhāgayā |
cinmātrasparśayogena vilīnaḥ syātpare pade ||

'Having (first) contemplated Unstruck Sound devoid of the vital breath (between inhalation and exhalation), with the undivided Speech of Vision by the Yoga of contact with pure consciousness (*cinmātrasparśa*), he dissolves away into the supreme plane (of existence).'

tato'svaro'rkasomāgnikalābījaprasūtibhāk |
udetyekaḥ samālokaḥ pramāṇārthapramātṛgaḥ ||

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[3] Cf. also VBh 117 and 129.

'Then arises Unstruck Sound (*asvara*) which is the one universal light (*samāloka*) that gives birth to the seed of the energies (*kalā*) of Fire, Moon and Sun, present in the subject, object and means of knowledge (respectively).'

This may be the Vāmanadatta who wrote the *Saṁvitprakāśa*. The manuscripts available from which I made the critical edition are all incomplete, so they may be two verses drawn from there but this is unlikely. These verses are most probably by Vāmanadatta, son of Harṣadatta, who wrote the *Subodhamañjarī*. This interesting tract on Kaula Yoga is quoted by Jayaratha in his commentary on TĀ 3/4 (this is verse 2) Bhagavatotpala quotes from it, calling it the *Svabodhodayamañjarī* in his commentary on Stanza 51 of the *Spandakārikā*. See Dyczkowski 1992 p. 175 and also ibid. 304–305 for an account of the author and nature of this text. The Kaula Yoga it teaches is similar to that of the *Vijñānabhairava*. The verses may also be from his *Dvayasaṁpattivārtika* which is quoted in VBh U ad v 90

Vāsudeva U ad v. v 45 Vāsudeva

Vimarśadīpikā U ad v. v 104 (It is said) in the *Vimarśadīpikā*:

viśvātma viśvottīrṇaṃ ca svatantraṃ divyam akṣaram |
aham ity uttamaṃ tattvaṃ samāviśya bibheti kaḥ ||

'Immanent (as all things) and transcendent (beyond all things), the divine phoneme—AHAṂ ('I') is free. Once one has entered (this) most excellent reality, who fears (anything)?'

Vimarśadīpikā U ad v. 127 (125)

Videhakaivalyasiddhi U v 107 (106) *Videhakaivalyasiddhi* (the Accomplishment of Disembodied Liberation):

tadbuddhayas tadātmānas tanniṣṭhās tatparāyaṇāḥ |

'those intent on that, established in that, that are of that nature and think of that ...'

vidyāvinayasaṃpanne brāhmaṇe gavi hastini |

'When one is endowed with knowledge and right conduct with respect to a Brahmin, a cow (or) a mare.'

Virupākṣapañcaśikā U v 107 (106) *Virupākṣapañcaśikā*:

'Having come forth in all directions from the body, the (residual) subjectivity is fixed in (just) one part of the body, like the vital breath stirring in the throat (of a dying man). Clearly, a person (in this condition, although) still alive, is (as if) dead.'

Vivekamārtaṇḍa U v 81 *Vivekamārtaṇḍa*:

kapālakuhare jihvā praviṣṭā viparītagā |
bhruvor antargatā dṛṣṭir mudrā bhavati khecarī ||
iti |

'The seal of Khecarī is (formed when) the tongue is curled back and introduced into the cavity of the skull (at the back of the nasal cavity) and the gaze is (fixed) between the eyebrows.'

Vīrayāmala U ad v. 138 (136) As is said in the *Vīrayāmala*:

utkrāntir vidyate yasya tasya syān mānakalpanā |

'He, who attains liberation by quitting the body (voluntarily) (*utkrānti*), has a notion of measure (*mānakalpanā*).'

yadi sarvagato devo vadotkramya kva yāsyati |
athāsarvagato devo ghaṭatulyas tadā bhavet ||

'If God is present everywhere, pray tell, having exited (from the body), where will he go? Now, if God is not present everywhere, He would be (inert) like a jar.'

Vīrāvalikula: U ad v. 155–156 (153–155)

sitāsitau dīrghahrasvau dharmādharmau dinakṣape |
kṣīyete yadi taddīkṣā vyāptyā dhyānena yogataḥ ||

'Initiation, (imparted by the experience of) pervasion, meditation and yoga, takes place if the bright and dark (lunar fortnights) (*sitāsitau*), long and short, righteousness (*dharma*) and unrighteousness (*adharma*), day and night, cease.'

Śāntarasādinidarśana Kau ad v. 125 (123): 'A snake or a necklace of pearls, a bed of flowers or (hard) stone, a jewel or iron, a powerful enemy or a friend, grass or a woman—may my days pass viewing (them all) as equal, be it during a battle, (or) in a forest (retreat) repeating "Śiva! Śiva! Śiva!"'

Śivadṛṣṭi U ad v. 105 (104) ŚDṛ 5/105cd-106ab, 109ab.

Śivamahimnastotra by Puṣpadanta verse 27. U v 39:

Śivastorāvali ŚSt 1/7 U 130 (128)

Śrīrudram Kau ad v. 124 (122) *śrīrudram* first *anuvāka* lines 15 and 16

Saṁvitprakāśa Kau ad v. 124 (122) U ad v. Saṁvit P 1/13

Sarvavīra U ad v 24 quoted in TĀv ad 12/24cd and in PTv p. 236, where the source is said to be the *Sarvācāra*;

Siddhāntamuktāvalī (this is a Nyāya text) Kau ad v. 46 (45):

'I see all this duality like a picture. I abide like the formless (Lord) as one with many forms. I recollect the non-dual Self, one with endless bliss and the beautiful world like a burnt rope. So too, I experience wonder (as tangibly) as a *bilva* (fruit) in the palm (of my) hand. I see the body as if it were a snake's slough. In this way also, my life and (all that) manifests (*pratibhāsana*) (to me), and (even the) attainment of the supreme good, is accomplished.'

Siddhāntamuktāvali: Kau ad v. 125 (123)

'He has bathed in the waters of all the sacred bathing sites, he has given all the earth, offered a thousand sacrifices, libation has been offered to all the gods, his ancestors have been pulled out of transmigratory existence, he too is worshipped by (all in) the three worlds, who has attained stability of mind reflecting on the Brahman for even just a moment.'

Skandapurāṇa U ad v. 123 (121)
āpo hi ṣṭheti vai māntraṁ----------| iti ārabhya
vāruṇaṁ cāvagāhyaṁ tu mānasaṁ viṣṇucintanam | iti paryante

Beginning with: (The bathing) with Mantra (takes place) when one is standing in water ... '*āpo hi ṣṭheti vai māntraṃ----------|* and ending with '(the bath pertaining to) Varuṇa (involves) plunging (into water). The mental one is (performed by) thinking of Viṣṇu.'

Stavacintāmaṇi U ad v. 127 (126) StCi 6cd; v. 132 (130) StCi 19cd

Spandakārikā Kau ad v. 35 and 50 (49) SpKā SpKā 25; Kau ad v. 71 (70) SpKā 22;

U ad v. 74 (73) SpKā 9; U ad v. v 96 (95) SpKā 41(quoted twice); Kau ad v. v 97 SpKā 19–21; Kau ad v. 116 (114) SpKā 28–30 (also quoted by Ānanda in common

v 33); 45) Kau ad v. 118 (116) SpKā 22; Kau ad v. 141–142ab (139–140ab) SpKā 19; Kau ad v. 35 and 50 (49) SpKā SpKā 25

Svacchandatantra U v 56 (55) SvT 4/95cd-97ab. U ad v. 74 (73) SvT 4/313cd; U ad v. (144cd-145) (142cd-143): SvT 4/195cd

Unknown Sources

Unknown source: U ad v. 62 (61)

dhyātṛdhyāne parityajya kramād dhyeyaikagocaram |
nivātadīpavac cittaṃ samādhir abhidhīyate ||

'Having abandoned progressively, the mind, whose sole field (of operation is) the object of meditation, meditation and the one who meditates, the contemplative absorption (*samādhi*) (that arises) is said to be (steady) like (the flame of) a lamp in a (still) windless (place).'

U ad v. 63 (62) *prakāśamānaṃ na pṛthak prakāśāt*——'The appearing (literally, 'shining' of things) is not separate from the light (of consciousness).' The full verse is quoted by Ānandabhaṭṭa ad v 137 (135)

Unknown source U v 25

Unknown: 'These (phases in the breathing cycle) beginning with breath retention, external and Internal, (go on) continuously. Having understood the nature of one's own exhalations and inhalations, it does not arise again. Moving or standing, waking or dreaming, they are not blocked. Wind is, by nature, (always) moving.'

Unknown: 'Whatever a person does and experiences inwardly recollecting these (eight), namely, breath retention and the rest, with awakened consciousness (*bodha*), (he experiences their spontaneity, and so, reduced to nought,) the agent (who exerts an effort) is there (in that case) nothing at all.' Source unknown U v 25

Unknown: 'The goal inside and the vision outside, without opening or closing the eyes—this is Bhairavī's seal (*mudrā*) that immediately bestows that plane (of liberated consciousness).' U v. 26 (also quoted in SpNir p. 26) It has been attributed by the editor of the VBh to the *Yogavāsiṣṭha* but cannot be traced there. Nor is it likely to be its source.

U ad v. 33 Unknown source:

sarvottīrṇaṃ rūpaṃ sopānapadakrameṇa saṃśrayataḥ |
paratattvarūḍhilābhe paryante śivamayībhāvaḥ || iti ||

'Taking the support of the all-transcendent nature by the sequence of stages on the ladder (of ascent), in the end, when a state of stability within the supreme reality has been achieved, (the yogi's) state of being is that of Śiva.'

bhuvanāditrayaṃ vācyaṃ padādivācakaṃ trayam |
śaktir etac cādhvaṣaṭkaṃ śaktimāṃs tu maheśvaraḥ ||

U v 56 (55) 'The triad beginning with (the Path of the) worlds is the object of denotation, (whereas), the triad which is the parts of Mantra etc, is the denotator. Again, Power is this group of six Paths and Maheśvara is the possessor of Power.' Unknown source

U ad v. 67 (66)

tad uktaṃ—yatra ubhayoḥ śvāsapraśvāsayoḥ sakṛdeva vidhārakāt prayatnāt abhāvo bhavati, na punaḥ pūrvavat āpūraṇaprayatnaughavidhāraṇam, nāpi recana-prayatnaughavidhāraṇam, kiṃ tu yathā tapte upale nihitaṃ jalaṃ pariśuṣyat sarvataḥ saṃkocam āpadyate

'(In the case) where both exhalation and inhalation cease by (exerting) the effort to restrain (them) just once, it does not (involve), as before, the restraint of the effort (to impel) the flux that fills (the breath), nor also the restraint of the effort (to impel) the flux (of the breath to) eject (it). Rather, just as water placed on heated stone evaporates (similarly in the course of breath restraint) it contracts in all respects.' Unknown source

U ad v. 77

karaṅkiṇī krodhinī ca bhairavī lelihānikā |
khecarī ceti mudrā yāḥ pañcātmakatayā sthitāḥ ||
yo jñānamantramelāpaśāktaśāmbhavabhedataḥ |
karmas tasya yathā saṃkhyam etābhiḥ sarvathānvayaḥ ||

'Karaṅkiṇī Krodhinī, Bhairavī, Lelihānikā and Khecarī—these seals abide together as a group of five (with the same nature). The activity (*karman*) (of these five), distributed amongst the Jñāna, Mantra, Melāpa, Śākta and Śāmbhava (Siddhas), respectively, is in all respects continuous with them.' Unknown source

iyaṃ sā paramā mudrā hy āpātālāc chivāvadhi |
tarpayitvā jagat sarvaṃ nijasaṃsthānataḥ sthitā ||

'This is the supreme seal. Having offered libation to all the universe, from the hell worlds up to Śiva, it abides (perpetually) by virtue of its own (supreme) condition.'

35) U v 90 (91) MVV 1/887cd-891ab, 893cd-895; U ad v. 138 (136) MVV 1/184–187

visargaḥ kaulikī śaktis tajjo'yaṃ mātṛkodayaḥ |

'Emission (*visarga*) is Kaulikīśakti, this emergence of the energies of the phonemes (*mātṛkā*) is born from that.' Unknown source

46) U 121 (119)

na pādapatanaṃ bhaktir vyāpinaḥ parameśituḥ |
bhaktir bhāvasvabhāvānāṃ tadekībhāvabhāvanam ||

'Devotion is not falling at the feet of the all-pervasive Supreme Lord. The devotion of those whose nature is deep feeling (*bhāva*) is the contemplation of oneness with Him.' Unknown source

U ad v. 137 (135)

na tasya prāṇā utkrāmanti atraiva samavalīyante | iti upaniṣatprāmāṇyāt

'His vital breaths do not exit (the body), (rather), they dissolve away completely here (within consciousness).' (Unknown source)

25) Kau ad v. v 69 (68) (These verses are from some Upaniṣad)

jāyayā saṃpariṣvakto na bāhyaṃ vetti cāntaram |
nidarśanaṃ śrutiṃ prāha mūḍhastaṃ manyate param ||

'Embraced by (his) wife, he knows neither what is outside or inside. The Veda says that this is an example. (Only) a fool considers it to be an injunction!'

na sṛṣṭir jāyate liṅgān na bhagān nāpi retasaḥ |
ānandocchalitā śaktiḥ sṛjaty ātmānam ātmanā || BhṛA 2/2/

'Emanation does not come from the penis, nor the vagina, not even from the vital seed. It is power that has been stimulated by bliss that emanates itself by itself.'

U ibid also quotes: 'Emanation does not come from the penis, nor the vagina, not even from the vital seed. It is power that has been stimulated by bliss that emanates itself by itself.'

'Embraced by (his) wife, he knows neither what is outside or inside'.

27) U ad v. 72 (71)

raso vai saḥ rasaṃ hy ovāyaṃ labdhvānandī bhavati |

'He is indeed *rasa*, once one has obtained that *rasa*, he is blissful.'

na ninded atha vandeta vīradravyaparān narān |

'One should not criticize the men who are dedicated to substances meant for Kaula adepts (*vīradravya*), rather one should praise them.'

U ad v. 74 (73)

dehe'pi viṣmṛte yasya cidvimarśasya bhāvanāt |
mahātmano viraktasya bhogāsaṅgo na rocate ||

'When his body has been forgotten by contemplating the reflective awareness of consciousness, that great soul, disaffected, does not wish to be attached to worldly experience.' Unidentified source

29) Kau ad v. and U ad v. 75 (74)

nidrādau jāgarasyānte yo bhāva upajāyate |
taṃ bhāvaṃ bhāvayan sākṣād akṣayānandam aśnute ||

'Contemplating the state (*bhāva*) that arises when sleep begins and waking ends, one experiences imperishable bliss directly.' Source unknown

U v 90 Here, (concerning the phoneme) without *visarga* and the letter A, according to supplementary commentary (*paribhāṣā* on Pāṇini's grammar), there is no phonemic conjuction (*sandhi*) (with a following phoneme (as the rule applies that)) *ekadharmiṇo vā savarṇe prakṛtiḥ* |

dhik tāṃ ca taṃ ca madanaṃ ca imāṃ ca māṃ ca |

'Fie on her (the queen) and (fie) on him (her lover). (Fie) on Madana (the god of love) and on this (my queen) and on me (the king).' *Vairagyaśataka* by Bhartṛhari

mātā yasya umā devī | ityādivat |

'He whose mother is the Goddess Umā.'

imāṃ nairuttarīṃ daśāṃ saṃcetya śrībhagavatpādair api siddhāntitam |

na caikaṃ tadanyad dvitīyaṃ kutaḥ syāt
na vā kevalatvaṃ na cākevalatvam |
na śūnyaṃ na cāśūnyam advaitakatvāt
kathaṃ sarvavedāntasiddhaṃ bravīmi || iti |

Having reflected on this, the unexcelled state (of Anuttara), the venerable Bhagavatapāda has concluded:

'There is no oneness. Where could there be a second other than that? Nor is there a state of (liberated) isolation, nor its absence, not the Void nor the absence of the Void because it is non-dual. How can I talk about what has been established (to be true) by all the Vedāntas?'

U v 90 (91) *visargaḥ kaulikī śaktis tajjo'yaṃ mātṛkodayaḥ |*

'Emission (*visarga*) is Kaulikīśakti, this emergence of the energies of the phonemes (*mātṛkā*) is born from that.' Source is unknown.

U v 100 (99)

buddhādvaitasatattvasya yatheṣṭācaraṇaṃ yadi |
śunāṃ tattvadṛśāṃ caiva ko bhedo'śucibhakṣaṇe ||

'If one who has realized the non-duality of consciousness and its (deeper) reality were not to be free to behave as he wishes, then what difference would there be between dogs and those who perceive the true nature (of things), when eating what is impure?' source unknown

U v 104 As the Buddhists say also:

satyātmani parasaṃjñā svaparavibhāge ca rāgavidveṣau |
anayoḥ saṃpratibaddhāḥ sarve doṣāḥ prajāyante ||

'If there is a Self, the denotation (of another person as someone) else (is possible. This is) when there is a division between, 'self' and 'other', attachment and aversion. All defects arise, bound to these two.'

U ad v. 155–156 (153–155) said (by the Buddhists):

niṣprapañcā nirābhāsā nirvikalpā nirāmayā |
niḥsvabhāvā parā sūkṣmā bindunādavivarjitā ||
prajñāpāramitāpārā sarvabuddhodayā parā |

'Free of thought constructs, unmanifest, devoid of thought constructs, disease and 'own nature', she is supreme (*parā*), subtle, and devoid of Sound (*nāda*) and the Point (*bindu*), She is otherwise (called) Prajñāpāramitā, the supreme (Goddess) Parā who is the dawning of all the Buddhas.'

U v 104 This is agreed. It is also (said) by a preceding teacher:

ekako'ham iti saṃsṛtau janas trāsasāhasarasena khidyate |
ekako'ham iti ko'paro'sti me ittham asmi gatabhīr vyavasthitaḥ ||

'The person who, within creation, (thinks) "I am alone", is tired out by the emotion (*rasa*) of (alternating) fright and audacity. (The person who thinks) "I am one, who is there other than me?" (Realizes that), "In this way, I abide free from fear."

U v 104 As the Buddhists say also:

satyātmani parasaṃjñā svaparavibhāge ca rāgavidveṣau |
anayoḥ saṃpratibaddhāḥ sarve doṣāḥ prajāyante ||

'If there is a Self, the denotation (of another person as someone) else (is possible. This is) when there is a division between, 'self' and 'other', attachment and aversion. All defects arise, bound to these two.'

46) U ad v. 121 (119)

na pādapatanaṃ bhaktir vyāpinaḥ parameśituḥ |
bhaktir bhāvasvabhāvānāṃ tadekībhāvabhāvanam ||

'Devotion is not falling at the feet of the all-pervasive Supreme Lord. The devotion of those, whose nature is deep feeling (*bhāva*), is the contemplation of oneness with Him.' Unknown source

U ad v. 123 (121)

yad uktaṃ mahāgurubhiḥ

mṛjjalādiviśuddho'pi na pavitro bahirmukhaḥ |
bahirnirmalamadhyasthapurīṣakalaśādivat ||

Our great teacher: 'Even though he has been completely cleaned with mud and water etc, the extroverted (worldly man) is not (thereby spiritually) pure (*pavitra*), just like a jar that is clean on the outside (but contains) urine within it.' (Abhinava?)

asnātas tu pumān nārho japyāgnihavanādiṣu |
snāto'dhikārī sarvatra daive pitrye ca karmaṇi ||

'A person who has not bathed is not fit to repeat Mantra or make offerings to the fire and the like, (whereas), one who has bathed is competent in all cases (to attend and perform) the rites for the gods and the ancestors.'

etat tu na kvacit uktam tadā jñānādhikāro'sti mṛjjalādiśucir yadā |

(However), in some places (in the Law books and scriptures), it is said that that is not so. Thus, (we read there that):

'He is competent to (acquire spiritual) knowledge (only) if he has been purified with mud and water etc.'

dehaṃ ca naśvaram avasthitam utthitaṃ vā
siddho na paśyati yato'dhyagamat svarūpam | iti |

U ad v. 123 (121)

'*āpo hi ṣṭheti vai māntraṃ*----------| and ending with '(the bath pertaining to) Varuṇa (involves) plunging (into water). The mental one is (performed by) thinking of Viṣṇu.'[4]

U ad v. 127 (125) 'It is void of all supporting attributes and all realities without exception, all impediments and residual traces (of past experience), in reality it is not void.' Kṣemarāja quotes this verse in the *Spandanirnaya* p. 27 saying that it is by Nāgārjuna.

U ad v. 131 (129)

mā na bhūvaṃ hi bhūyāsam iti premātmanīkṣyate |
atas tat paramaṃ tena paramānandatātmanaḥ || iti |

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[4] *skandapurāṇe abhihitam*
āpo hi ṣṭheti vai māntraṃ----------| *iti ārabhya*
vāruṇaṃ cāvagāhyaṃ tu mānasaṃ viṣṇucintanam | iti paryante

One perceives within the essential nature of love (the sentiment), "May I be me not the world," thus, that is supreme by means of that of the nature of supreme blissfulness. Pañcadaśī[5]

U ad v. 131 (129)

avināśī vāsudevo viṣṇur viśvambharo hariḥ |
itthaṃ kīrtanamātreṇa kalau mokṣo hi śāśvataḥ ||

iti pāñcarātramataṃ kaṭākṣeṇa pramāṇayan śāktīṃ bhūmim āha

'By just praising (the Lord) in this way, as the imperishable Vāsudeva, Viṣṇu, Viśvambhara and Hari, the liberation (attained) in the Age of Darkness (*kali*) is eternal.' *Pāñcarātra* text.

By looking graciously on (this) teaching of the (Vaiṣṇava) Pāñcarātra and taking it to be authoritative, he (now) teaches the plane of Śakti.

U ad v. 130 (128) ĪP 1/1/4

ātmany eva namāmi nāma visaradromāñcarekhāṅkurā –
krāntyā kiṃ ca davīyasīr api diśo jānāmi rundhe haṭhāt |
yan me bhairava bhairaveti raṭato hṛdgranthivisphoṭana –
trutyatpāśavapāśapañjarabharaḥ kāyo'py anantāyate || iti ||

'I bow (with reverence) within my very (*eva*) Self to (Bhairava's) name, (my body) covered with hairs standing on end like rows of sprouts (as I do so). I know that although (my body is) most tiny (*anīyasī*), by my repeating 'Bhairava' 'Bhairava', it blocks the directions with (great) force (protecting me from evil influences). Breaking the burden of the cage of the fetters of the perishable fettered soul by bursting apart the knot of the Heart, the body also becomes infinite.'

also quoted in ĪPVv 2, p. 137

57) Kau ad v. 137 (135)

prakāśamānaṃ na pṛthak prakāśāt
sa ca prakāśo na pṛthag vimarśāt |
nānyo vimarśo'ham iti svarūpāt
ahaṃvimarśo'smi cidekarūpaḥ ||

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[5] *Editor's Note:* In Mark Dyczkowski notes this was marked as 'to be rechecked'.

'The appearing ((*prakāśamāna*) literally 'shining' of things) is not separate from the light (of consciousness) and that Light is not separate from the reflective awareness (it has of itself). The reflective awareness that "I am' (*ahaṃ*) is not other than one's own (essential) nature. "I am the reflective awareness that I am" is consciousness alone.'

This verse is also quoted by Śivopādhyāya in his commentary on VBh 137 (135). It is found in the anonymous commentary on Kṣemarāja's *Śivasūtravimarśinī* 3/2.

jñānaṃ jñeyaṃ tathā jñātā tritayaṃ nāsti vāstavam |

'In actual fact, the triad of knowledge, (its) object and the knower does not (ultimately) exist.'

U ad v. 63 (62) *prakāśamānaṃ na pṛthak prakāśāt*—'The appearing (literally 'shining' of things) is not separate from the light (of consciousness).' The full verse is quoted by Ānandabhaṭṭa ad v 137 (135).

U ad v. 137 (135) *na tasya prāṇā utkrāmanti atraiva samavalīyante | iti upaniṣatprāmāṇyāt*

'His vital breaths do not exit (the body), (rather), they dissolve away completely here (within consciousness).' (Unknown source)

U ad v. 138 (136) *avināśī vā are ayam ātmā* |

'Sir, this Self is not destroyed.'

nityo nityānāṃ |

'It is the eternal of eternal (things).'

na jahāti mṛtaṃ cāpi sarvavyāpī dhanañjayaḥ |

'(The vital breath called) Dhanañjaya, which pervades all (the body), does not leave it even when it is dead.'

bahulamahasi bodhe procchalatyekarūpe
jananamaraṇabhāṣāṃ kātarāḥ kalpayitvā |
aviditaparamārthās tīrthadevālayādi –
śrayaṇam upadiśanto hanta nāpatrapante ||

iti | tata etanmārgaśraddhāvatāṃ vivekināṃ jīvanmuktir api tṛṇam iva bhāsate, kā kathā paśudarśanajīvitabhūtāyā antyeṣṭivārtāyāḥ, yat stotre'pi

Jayaratha has also said that (bathing or performing funerary rites) for those who are devoted to the secret teachings is useless. As (he has) said in (his) hymn:

'Those who, ignorant of reality, having imagined that within the one great and abundant consciousness, that pours forth (as all things), there is talk of birth and death, teach attendance to bathing sites, temples and the like (as a remedy for that)—indeed (*hanta*) have no shame!'

Thus, for those discerning ones who have faith in that path, even liberation in this life appears to be (as valueless) as grass, what to say of funerary rites that draw their life from the vision fettered souls (have of reality). As (is said) in (that same) hymn also:

nayakalanayā yasyodbhūte vivekaparāmṛte
tṛṇam iva na sā jīvanmuktir gatā gaṇanīyatām |
pramayasamaye pratyāsanne svasaṃvidi saṃsphuran
abhilaṣati naivāntyeṣṭyādyāḥ kriyāḥ paśukalpitāḥ ||

'One, for whom the supreme nectar of discernment has arisen by contact with (the true) teaching (*naya*), considers liberation in life to be (as worthless) as grass.[6] When the time to die has drawn close, pulsing radiantly within his own consciousness, he has no desire indeed for the rites like funerals and the like conceived by fettered souls.'

mṛtasya piṇḍaracanāpi upahāsyaiva | yad uktaṃ

prāgjanmakoṭisamupārjitaduṣkṛtaugha –
khedāvahaṃ kam api piṇḍam avaiti jantuḥ |
ūrdhvordhvaśāsanarato'pi gurur mṛtāya
tasmai samarpayati piṇḍam iti pramādaḥ ||

Offering food to one who is deceased is also just a joke! As is said:

'The body (*piṇḍa*) of a person brings on the distress of the flood of sins accumulated from preceding tens of millions of births. A teacher who, even though he is devoted to ever higher teachings, offers food (*piṇḍa*) to one deceased, is (indeed) madness!'

---

[6] *tṛṇam iva na sā jīvanmuktir gatā gaṇanīyatām* more literally means '(consider) that liberation in life is, like grass, not taken into consideration (as being of any value).'

jīvāpetaṃ vāva kila idaṃ mriyate na jīvo mriyate |

'Indeed, (the body) has been abandoned by the soul, it is this that dies. The soul (*jīva*) does not die.'

Kau ad v. 141–142ab (139–140ab)

apāma somam amṛtā abhūma

'We have drunk the Soma and became immortal'

APPENDIX 4

CITATIONS DRAWN FROM THE *VIJÑĀNABHAIRAVA*

Citations in the *Tantrāloka* and its Commentary

Abhinava draws only two direct citations from the *Vijñānabhairava* in the *Tantrāloka*, whereas Jayaratha, his commentator, refers to as many as thirty that he considers to be compatible and related to what he says. They are as follows.

TĀv ad 1/1: VBh h 20d; also quoted in TĀv ad 1/73 (74), 3/172 (171cd-172ab), 3/194 (3/193cd-194ab), 6/252ab (251cd) and 29/273cd-274ab; PrHr. ad 17 p. 38

TĀv ad 1/21: VBh 147 (145); also quoted in TĀv ad 4/121cd-122ab; 147d (145d) ad 28/190

TĀv ad 1/85cd (86cd) VBh 35;

TĀv ad 1/88–89ab (89–90ab) VBh 146 (144);

TĀv ad 1/89cd (90cd) VBh 145 (143); This verse is also quoted in SvTu ad 2/137cd-139ab.

TĀv ad 1/99cd (100cd) VBh 130 (128), VBh 24d;

TĀv ad 1/202–204 VBh 21, also quoted in TĀv ad 3/105cd-106ab;

TĀv ad 3/21–22 VBh 135 (133);

TĀv ad 3/84 (84cd-85ab) VBh 110ab (109ab) quoted in full ad 5/71cd-72ab (71);

TĀv ad 3/209cd-210 VBh 73 (72) also quoted in TĀv ad 3/229 and 3/239cd-240ab;

TĀv ad 4/212 VBh 106ab (105ab);

TĀv ad 5/22cd-23ab VBh 26;

TĀv ad 5/44–48ab VBh 155ab (154ab);

TĀv ad 5/71cd-72ab (71) VBh 69 (68), 70 (69), 51 (50), 66 (65), 109 (108) (also quoted in TĀv ad 15/406 (403cd-404ab)), 110 (109), 99 (98), 102 (101);

TĀv ad 5/88cd-89 (88–89ab) VBh 29;

TĀv ad 5/90–92ab (89cd-91) VBh 28;

TĀ5/136cd-137ab (135cd-136ab) is a partial quotation of VBh 130 (128) which is quoted in full by Jayaratha in the commentary; it is also quoted in TĀv ad 1/99cd (100cd);

TĀv ad 6/23cd-24ab VBh 156 (154);

TĀ 10/204 is a paraphrase of VBh 106 (105) quoted by Jayaratha in full, cited in MM p. 154 and in ŚSūvi on *sūtra* 1/18, a variant of the first line is quoted in TĀv ad 4/212;

TĀv ad 12/4 VBh 57 (56);

TĀ 15/484cd-485ab (480cd-481ab) light paraphrase of VBh 55

TĀv ad 15/406 (403cd-404ab) VBh 109 (108);

TĀv ad 28/190 VBh 147d (145d);

TĀv ad 29/118cd-119ab VBh 62 (61);

Citations from the *Vijñānabhairava* in the *Śivasūtravimarśinī*:

VBh 148 > p. 34 ŚSūvi ad 2/9 (*jñānam annam*)

VBh 15–16ab, 69–73 > p. 63 ŚSūvi ad 3/38 (*tripadādyanuprāṇanam*)

VBh 56, 52 > p. 38 ŚSūvi ad 3/4 (*śarīre saṃhāraḥ kalānām*)

VBh 106 > p. 18, 68 ŚSūvi ad 1/18 (*lokānandaḥ samādhisukham*) and 3/44 (*nāsikāntarmadhyasaṃyamāt kim atra savyāpasavyasauṣumneṣu*)

VBh 100 > p. 3 ŚSūvi ad 1/1 (*caitanyam ātmā*)

VBh 110 > p. 15 ŚSūvi ad 1/14 (*dṛśyaṃ śarīram*)

VBh 137 > p. 37 ŚSūvi ad 3/2 (*jñānaṃ bandhaḥ*)

VBh 145 and 156 > p. 55 ŚSūvi ad 3/27 (*kathā japaḥ*)

VBh 149 > p. 33 ŚSūvi ad 2/8 (*śarīraṃ haviḥ*)

VBh 138 > p. 51 ŚSūvi ad 3/21 (*magnaḥ svacittena praviśet*)

VBh 117 > p. 42 ŚSūvi ad 3/8 (*jāgrad dvitīyakaraḥ*)

VBh 109 > p. 17 ŚSūvi ad 1/17 (*vitarka ātmajñānam*)

VBh 65 > p. 18, 64 ŚSūvi ad 1/18 (*lokānandaḥ samādhisukham*) and ad 3/39 (*cittasthitivac charīrakaraṇabāhyeṣu*)

VBh 63 > p. 17 ŚSūvi ad 1/16 (*śuddhatattvasaṃdhānād vā'paśuśaktiḥ*)

VBh 49 > p. 16 ŚSūvi ad 1/15 (*hṛdaye cittasaṃghaṭṭād dṛśyasvāpadarśanam*)

Citations from the Vijñānabhairava elsewhere

Spandanirnaya–p. 23–VBh 138 (136), p. 27–VBh 14a; p. 40–VBh 101 (100), 71 (70), 118 (116)–5 citations

Pratyabhijñāhṛdaya p. 44—VBh 49 (48); p. 45 VBh 72 (71), 73 (72), 74 (73) 4 citations

Svacchandatantra ad 2/154cd-155ab—VBh 149 (147); ad 4/337cd—VBh 21; ad 7/56–VBh 156 (154); ad 7/224–VBh 116 (114); ad 7/249—VBh 123 (121); ad 12/144–109 (108);
6 citations

Netratantra ad 16/18cd–VBh 18; ad 21/40—VBh 18–2 citations

Spandapradīpikā p. 32—VBh 118 (116)

Dvayasaṃpatti is a commentary on VBh, VBh 90 (89) (p. 78–79) see note to TĀ 3/202cd-203ab

TĀv ad 5/71cd-72ab (71) VBh 69 (68), 70 (69), 51 (50), 66 (65), 109 (108) (also quoted in TĀv ad 15/406 (403cd-404ab)), 110 (109), 99 (98), 102 (101);

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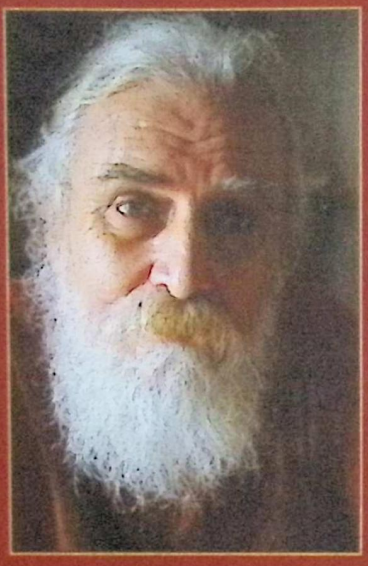

Mark Dyczkowski (1951–2025) was born in London. After completing his schooling in 1969, he went to India for his spiritual development and to study Sanskrit, Indian philosophy, and music. He received his first degree from Benares Hindu University in 1975 and returned to England for his doctoral research in Kashmir Śaivism at the University of Oxford. A disciple of Swami Lakshmanjoo, he lived and worked in India from 1979 onwards, and was widely recognised for his seminal contribution to the field of Tantric Śaivism. He was associated with the IGNCA from 1993 and for more than ten years supervised and contributed to the digital library of Tantric texts for the Muktabodha Indological Research Institute.

Vijñānabhairava Tantra is an early Kashmir Śaiva text containing 112 contemplative techniques for experiencing pure awareness. Written as a dialogue between Śiva and Devī, it covers practices ranging from breath awareness and contemplation of the body, to perception, sound, emotion, and emptiness — each aimed at freeing the mind from the fluctuation of thought and realizing one's identity with Bhairava, who is the supreme consciousness itself. Compact yet profound, it remains one of the most practical guides to meditation in the Hindu philosophical tradition. This edition presents Mark Dyczkowski's scholarly introduction and his translation and exposition of the root text, together with the classical commentaries of Ānandabhaṭṭa and Śivopādhyāya — rendered here in English for the first time.

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